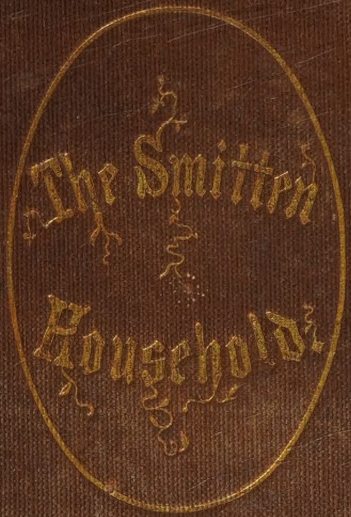
The Smitten
Household

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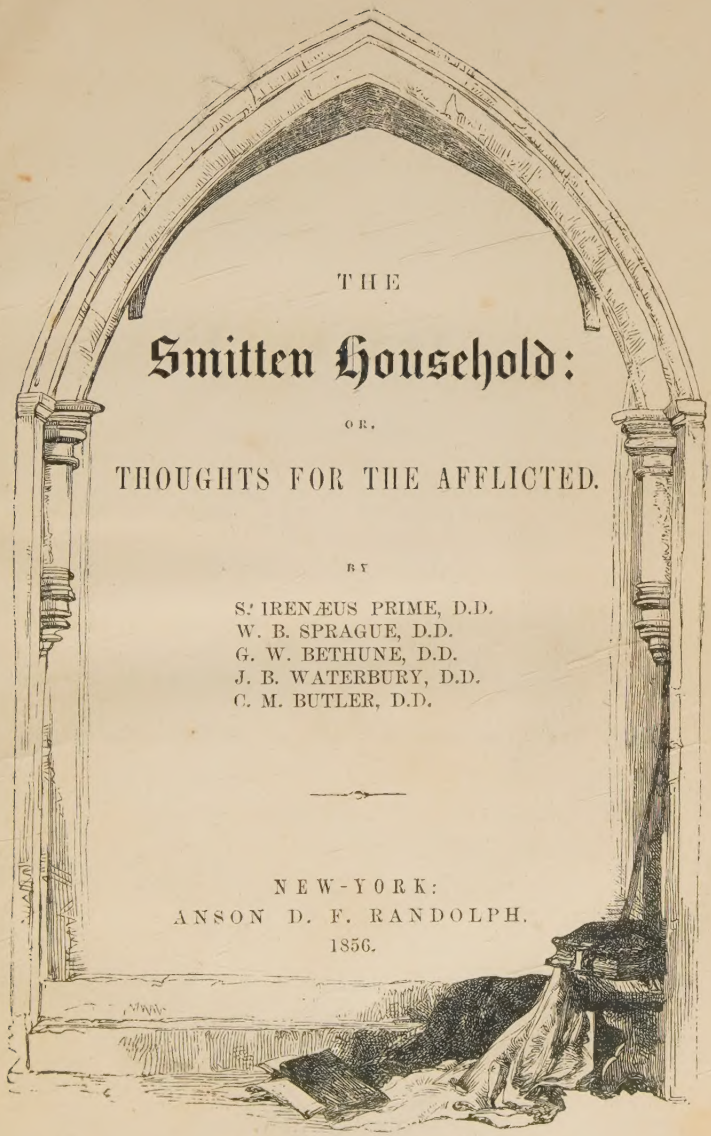

THE

Smitten Household:

OR,

THOUGHTS FOR THE AFFLICTED.

BY

S. IRENÆUS PRIME, D.D.
W. B. SPRAGUE, D.D.
G. W. BETHUNE, D.D.
J. B. WATERBURY, D.D.
C. M. BUTLER, D.D.

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Publisher's Note.

From hundreds of stricken families, assurances have been received of sweet consolation imparted by the "Thoughts on the Death of Little Children." It was the evidence of the usefulness of that volume which suggested the idea of obtaining from distinguished clergymen of several religious denominations similar thoughts of comfort for the mourning household, when death has entered it, and removed a Wife, a Husband, a Parent, or a Friend. The idea found immediate favor in the eyes of all to whom it was submitted, and the writers cheerfully furnished the elegant and appropriate treatises which are here published under their respective names. Not only to the thousands of families who are accustomed to receive spiritual instruction from the lips of these men, but to thousands besides, this book will go with messages of comfort and peace.

The publisher wishes to add that the authors who have contributed these essays are not to be held responsible for the sentiment or taste of the poetical selections with which the book is interspersed.

Death of Little Children.

BY

SAMUEL IRENÆUS PRIME, D.D.

Words of Scripture.

Although affliction cometh not forth from the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.—Job 5 : 6, 7.

Consider the work of God! for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful; but in the day of adversity consider. God also hath set the one over against the other.—Ecclesiastes 7 : 13, 14.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.—Ecclesiastes 7 : 2, 3, 4.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days and full of trouble.—Job 14 : 1.

Death of Little Children.

The Child is Dead.

It is hard to believe it: that we shall no more hear the glad voice, nor meet the merry laugh that burst so often from its glad heart.

Child as it was, it was a pleasant child, and to the partial parent there are traits of loveliness that no other eye may see. It was a wise ordering of Providence that we should love our own children as no one else loves them, and as we love the children of none besides. And ours was a lovely child.

But the child is dead. You may put away its playthings. Put them where they will be safe. I would not like to have them broken or lost; and you need not lend them to other children when they come to see us. It would pain me to

see them in other hands, much as I love to see children happy with their toys.

Its clothes you may lay aside; I shall often look them over, and each of the colors that he wore will remind me of him as he looked when he was here. I shall weep often when I think of him; but there is a luxury in thinking of the one that is gone, which I would not part with for the world. I think of my child now, a child always, though an angel among angels.

The child is dead. The eye has lost its lustre. The hand is still and cold. Its little heart is not beating now. How pale it looks! Yet the very form is dear to me. Every lock of its hair, every feature of the face, is a treasure that I shall prize the more, as the months of my sorrow come and go.

Lay the little one in his coffin. He was never in so cold and hard a bed, but he will feel it not. He would not know it, if he had been laid in his cradle, or in his mother's arms. Throw a flower or two by his side: like them he withered.

Carry him out to the grave. Gently. It is a hard road this to the grave. Every jar seems to disturb the infant sleeper. Here we are, at the brink of the sepulchre. Oh! how damp, and dark, and cold! But the dead do not feel it.

There is no pain, no fear, no weeping there. Sleep on now, and take your rest!

Fill it up! Ashes to ashes, dust to dust! Every clod seems to fall on my heart. Every smothered sound from the grave is saying, Gone, gone, gone! It is full now. Lay the turf gently over the dear child. Plant a myrtle among the sods, and let the little one sleep among the trees and flowers. Our child is not there. His dust, precious dust! indeed, is there, but our child is in heaven. He is not here; he is risen.

I shall think of the form that is mouldering here among the dead; and it will be a mournful comfort to come at times, and think of the child that was once the light of our house, and the idol—ah! that I must own the secret of this sorrow—the *idol* of my heart.

And it is beyond all language to express the joy I feel, in the midst of tears, that my sin, in making an idol of the child, has not made that child less dear to Jesus. Nay, there is even something that tells me the Saviour called the darling from me, that I might love the Saviour more when I had one child less to love. He knoweth our frame; he knows the way to win and bind us. Dear Saviour, as thou hast my

lamb, give *me* too a place in thy bosom. Set me as a seal on thy heart.

And now let us go back to the house. It is strangely changed. It is silent and cheerless, gloomy even. When did I enter this door, without the greeting of those lips and eyes, that I shall greet no more? Can the absence of but one produce so great a change so soon? When one of the children was away on a visit, we did not feel the absence as we do now. That was for a time; this is for ever. He will not return. Hark! I thought for a moment it was the child, but it was only my own heart's yearning for the lost. He will not come again.

* * * *

Such thoughts as these have been the thoughts of many in the season of their first grief.

As heart answereth to the heart, there is a wondrous likeness in the sorrow of parents over the death of their little ones. The rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant are alike, when they sit by the side of their babes in the struggles of death; and when they follow them to the grave, their hearts are true to nature, and nature mourns when the loved are torn away.

One of the iron sort of men, a man of war, sent for me to come and see him in his affliction.

His child, a sweet girl of three or four years only, had been taken with the croup, and died before medical relief could be obtained. He met me in his hall, and fell on my neck, and wept like a child. I had never seen him weep before. I had never thought that such a man as he, had tears to shed. And I do not know that he would have wept, had the pestilence or the sword swept off all the rest of those whom he loved, and spared the infant that nestled in his bosom.

If this is a weakness to those who have never tasted the cup, I am sure that none of them will be offended with these words, for they will not read them till they are weeping too. To be a brother in sorrow, you must have suffered. Even the Lord of heaven had to become a man, that he might, by his experience, learn to bear our sorrows. And then he wept with those who wept.

Some time ago I was at the funeral of the child of a pastor; and when the neighboring minister, who had been called upon to bury his brother's child, had closed his words of sympathy and comfort, the stricken father rose and said: "When I have sought to minister to your consolation in the times of your affliction, weeping with you over your dying children, you have often said to

me that I knew nothing of the anguish, and could not sympathize with you in your loss. I feel it now. I never did before." And then he pointed them to the sources of comfort that God was oping to his soul, and asked them to come to the fountain and drink. The house in which we were then assembled stood on a hill-side, overlooking a beautiful river, and, on the other side of it, "sweet fields stood drest in living green." The pastor went on to say — and there was a strange power and beauty, too, in the words as they fell from his lips in the midst of tears — "Often, as I have stood on the borders of this stream, and looked over to the fair fields on the other shore, I have felt but little interest in the people or the place in full view before me. The river separates me from them, and my thoughts and affections were here. But a few months ago, one of my children moved across to the other side, and took up his residence there. Since that time, my heart has been there also. In the morning, when I rise and look out toward the east, I think of my child who is over there, and again and again through the day I think of him, and the other side of the river is always in my thoughts with the child who is gone there to dwell. And now, since another of my children has crossed the river of

death, and has gone to dwell on the other side, my heart is drawn out toward heaven and the inhabitants of heaven as it was never drawn before. I supposed that heaven was dear to me; that my Father was there, and my friends were there, and that I had a great interest in heaven, but I *had no child there!* Now I have; and I never shall think of heaven, but with the memory of that dear child who is to be among its inhabitants for ever."

The Rev. Dr. Pye was called to part with two children, a son and a daughter. A few days afterwards, he wrote a letter as if it had come from the girl just after she had ceased to breathe, and a little before her brother's death. Here is an extract from the letter which he supposes his child to write:

"It was He who made us that called us away, and we cheerfully obeyed the summons; and I must now tell you, though you already know it, that he expects from you not only that you meekly and calmly submit to such a seemingly severe dispensation of his providence, but that you also rejoice with me in it, because it is the will and pleasure of our divine Father. I, young as I was, am now an inhabitant of heaven, and already see the beauty and harmony of that little

chain of events which related to my short abode in your world, and even the manner of my leaving it; and when you see the things as they really are, and not as they now appear, you will confess and adore the Divine goodness, even in taking us so soon from your embraces.

"Ask not why it has pleased God so early to remove us; we sufficiently answered the great end of our being, if, while living, at the same time that we gave you pleasure, you were disposed to lead us, by your examples and precepts, into the paths of virtue and religion; and if now, by the loss of us, you become examples of patience and submission to the Divine will."

"Let, therefore, all the little incidents in our past lives, the remembrance of which is too apt to renew your sorrow, be so many occasions of your joy, inasmuch as they may recall the pleasant ideas you once delighted in; and let the dismaying and melancholy remembrance of our sickness and early death be changed into cheering and bright ideas of what we now enjoy, and what you, I hope, will one day see us in possession of."

There was something very comforting in this thought, of the child departed sending back a message to the mourning parent. I doubt not

that children in heaven are astonished, if they know, that their parents here are grieving on their account. "If our parents only knew what we have gained, how soon they would dry their tears!"

The lady of Sir Stamford Raffles, in India, was overwhelmed with grief for the loss of a favorite child, unable to bear the sight of her other children, unable to bear even the light of day. She was lying upon her couch, with a feeling of desolation that was fast growing into despair, when she was addressed by a poor, ignorant woman, one of the natives, who had been employed in the nursery: "I am come," said the servant, "because you have been here many days shut up in a dark room, and no one dares to come near you. Are you not ashamed to grieve in this manner, when you ought to be thanking God for having given you the most beautiful child that ever was seen? Did any one ever see him or speak of him without admiring him? And, instead of letting this child continue in this world till he should be worn out with trouble and sorrow, has not God taken him to heaven in all his beauty? What would you have more? For shame! leave off weeping, and let me open a window."

It is not always wise to bid a mourner "leave

off weeping." Tears are sometimes good for the soul. That grief is very bitter which can not find tears. I have often wished that they would come, and relieve this dry and dreadful pressure on the heart. But if we do not cease to weep, by all means let us open the window. Let us have the light of God's countenance shining upon us like the sun at noon. To shut ourselves up in the dark to brood over our sorrows, is the worst of all remedies for grief. To cherish our afflictions, as if they were to be indulged, and petted, and kept fresh as long as possible, and as if it were wrong for us to go out into the world, and mingle in the duties and pleasures of social Christian life, is a sinful yielding to the power of a dispensation that was not designed to be thus received.

The pious Flavel says—and there is great wisdom in these words of his—"Mourner, whatever may be your grief for the death of your children, it might have been still greater for their life. Bitter experience once led a good man to say, 'It is better to weep for ten children dead, than for one living.' Remember the heart-piercing affliction of David, whose son sought his life. Your love for your children will hardly admit of the thought of such a thing as possible in your own case. They appeared innocent and amiable;

and you fondly believed that, through your care and prayers, they would have become the joy of your hearts. But parents much more frequently see the vices of their children than their virtues. And even should your children prove amiable and promising, you might live to be the wretched witness of their sufferings. Some parents have felt unutterable agonies of this kind. God may have taken the lamented objects of your affection from the evil to come."

A mother, suddenly convinced that her child was dying, sent for a man of God to come and pray for the child's life. "Shall I not pray," said he, "that the will of the Lord may be done, and that you may have strength to suffer all that holy will?" "No," she answered in the agony of her heart, "no, no! I want my child to live. Pray for his life, or do not pray at all." The child lived, and lived to be a man, a great man; but oh! how wicked — and to pierce his mother's heart with pangs of anguish which made that night almost a night of joy, when she would not let her infant die. We do not know from what our infants are saved, when they are saved from draining the cup of life.

"In another life," says Fenelon, "we shall see and understand the wonders of His goodness that

have escaped us in this; and we shall rejoice at what has made us weep on earth. Alas! in our present darkness, we can not see either our true good or evil. If God were to gratify our desires, it would be our ruin. He saves us by breaking the ties that bind us to earth. We complain because God loves us better than we know how to love ourselves. We weep because he has taken those whom we love away from temptation and sin. God takes the poisonous cup from our hands, and we weep as a child weeps when its mother takes away the shining weapon with which it would pierce its own breast.

"Oh! consider, ere you accuse Providence for the stroke, that this death, apparently so untimely, is possibly the greatest instance toward you both of the mercy and love of God. The creature so dear to you may have been taken from some sad reverse of fortune, or from the commission of some great crime, which might have endangered his salvation. To secure this, God has removed him from temptation. The pang of separation is indeed most bitter, yet our merciful Father does not needlessly afflict his creatures. He wounds only to heal the diseases of our souls. Let us, then, in the hour of our calamity, hold fast by this conviction, and say with

Job, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' His mercy can be my support here, and my recompense hereafter."

This is the spirit of Christian submission to the will of Heaven. With such a spirit is the grace that says: "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." And this same holy Fenelon was called to the trial of his faith. Standing by the coffin of one whom he most tenderly loved, and for whom he would most cheerfully have died a thousand deaths, he cried:

"There he lies, and all my worldly happiness lies dead with him. But if the turning of a straw would call him back to life, I would not for ten thousand worlds be the turner of that straw, in opposition to the will of God."

"I have had six children," said Mr. Eliot, "and I bless God for his free grace, they are all with Christ, or in Christ; and my mind is now at rest concerning them. My desire was that they should have served Christ on earth; but if God will choose to have them serve him in heaven, I have nothing to object to it. His will be done."

Yes, I will say so likewise: His will be done. It is the best and wisest will; and though it does darken all my prospects, and disappoint a thousand cherished hopes, I know that He who has

done it doeth all things well. I can trust him for this, as I have never trusted him yet, when his promises have failed.

"I sincerely sympathize with you," says Dr. Erskine, to a friend who had lost an only son, "in your heavy trial. I have drunk deep of the same cup; of *nine sons*, only one survives. From what I repeatedly felt, I can form an idea what you must feel. I can not, I dare not say, weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely he allows you to weep. But oh! let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not how this shall work for your good; but it is enough that God knows. He that said, 'All things shall work together for good to them that love God,' excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you can not doubt that he accepted the surrender. If he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his behalf, was spiritual and heavenly blessings. If the greatest thing you wished for is accomplished, at the season and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted. You know not what work and what

joy have been waiting for him in that other world."

An old tomb-stone bears this epitaph, and one might think an angel whispers it to a mourning mother's ear:

"Weep not, my mother, weep not; I am blest,
But must leave heaven, if I *come to thee;*
For I am where the weary are at rest,
The wicked cease from troubling. *Come to me.*"

* * * *

I know there are thousands of hearts that will read these chapters, not with sympathy only, but with comfort and sacred peace. There is scarcely a house in the world, into which the sorrow has not come which follows the death of a child. It is almost literally true—

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair."

The child is dead. Our child is dead. Let us now go to the book of God, and learn its lessons in the time of our affliction.

Can I bring him back again?

The child of David, the bard and king, was dead. His son, his favorite son, his precious, well-beloved, best-beloved son was dead. For seven long, anxious days and nights, while the scale trembled in suspense, he had fasted and wept. Kings' children die:

> "————————Death, with impartial fate,
> Knocks at the palace door and cottage gate."

The crown often rests on an aching head, and the royal purple covers a sad heart, when the messenger of the grave steals into the king's chamber, and stops the breath of his babes. It is so in ours.

The kind attendants of the stricken father reasoned wisely, as they reason who do not understand the power of true religion. They said among themselves: He was weeping and praying while the child was yet alive; how he will vex himself, how much greater will be his anguish, now the child is dead!

They mistook the man. They judged him by their own standard, and were wrong. The pious

father drew from a deeper fountain, and found waters they knew not of. He reasoned on other principles than those which lie on the surface of things, and he was strengthened.

He saw the servants whispering, and thought it was probably all over with the child. It was a sign that death was in the house, when even the servants would not speak above their breath. The dead can not hear, but the living are still when death is at hand.

And David asked, "Is the child dead?"

And they answered, "He is dead."

Then David arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and *came into the house of the Lord*, AND WORSHIPPED.

Then he came to his own house, and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. And the servants were filled with wonder that a father thus stricken with grief should so suddenly find comfort in his sorrow; and they said unto him:

"What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive, but when the child was dead, thou didst arise and eat bread."

And David answered: "While the child was

yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

"*Can I bring him back again?*" A sad inquiry. *Can* I bring him back again? Not *Would* I? Perhaps he would. Perhaps we would. But CAN I? Had tears availed to save, the child would not have died. Had prayer prevailed, the boy would yet be living, the joy of his parents' hearts, and the light of their eyes. But he is dead. He is gone. Could human skill avert the death-blow, he would have been saved. But all was done that skill could do, and yet he died. And there he lies. Can I bring him to life again? I may weep, but my tears fall on his icy brow, and he feels them not. His heart is still. He breathes no more. The love and wit of men are alike in vain to restore the spirit of this lifeless clay. Speak to it, and it hears not. Kiss it, and its lips are cold. Press it to your bosom, and it is not warmed. The child is dead, dead; and can I bring it back again? Ah! if I could! If rivers of waters running down my eyes, if oceans of tears would float his spirit back to this deserted shell that once was animated with his precious

soul, I would weep day and night for my departed.

But it is fruitless. And it is not the part of a rational being to expend the energies of his nature on that which avails him nothing. This may be the least and lowest source of comfort that reason offers to a mind distressed, but it is the dictate of wisdom, and grace adds its sanctions to the conclusion forced upon us by the law of nature. It is the will of God, and we can not change the purpose if we would.

We can not bring him back again. *Then* and *therefore* let us lay his ashes in their kindred dust, close the green turf over his mouldering form, and turn to the Book of God for consolation in the day of our calamity.

He is not lost, though gone.

It is clearly revealed that God employs the spirits whom he has made, to minister unto those whom he delights to tend with peculiar care. With the mode of angelic or spiritual intercourse, we are not acquainted. That disembodied spirits,

the evil and the good, are permitted to reach our minds and exert a power on our spirits, is not to be doubted, though we may be unable to respond to that influence, and, at the moment of its communication, may be unconscious of its presence.

"Millions of spiritual beings walk the earth unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep." And we believe, with many others, that if we were suddenly divested of this mortal, we should find ourselves in a vast amphitheatre, reaching to the throne of God, filled with spirits, the unseen witnesses, the clouds of witnesses with whom we are encompassed continually. There is a place where the Most High dwells in light that no man can approach ; where the darkness of excessive brightness hangs over and around his throne, making *heaven*, as heaven is not elsewhere in the universe of God. But neither time nor place may with propriety be affirmed of spiritual existence. When Gabriel leaves his throne to execute the high behests of the Almighty, there is no intervening time or space between his departure and his presence, where his work is to be done. We use the terms that are adapted to our mode of existence, and are lost when we attempt to express the life of those whose nature is in another scale and order of beings than our own.

It is, therefore, scriptural and rational to suppose that the spirits of our departed friends are around us by day and night; not away from God: his presence fills immensity; he is everywhere present. If an angel or the soul of a saint should take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, there to be with us or with those we love, even there the gracious presence of God would dwell, and the sanctified would find *heaven* as blessed and glorious as in the temple of which the Lamb is the light.

We must be near to one another, to see and be seen, to hear and be heard. Our bodily organs are of necessity restricted, and hence we have the impression that spirits must be bound by the same fetters. But this is an illusion that vanishes, when we reflect that speech, and sound, and sight are attributes belonging to spirits only to accommodate us in our conception of communication with them. *Thought* is the language of the soul. Words are needed to convey that thought through the organs of the body to another soul. If there were no intervening body, I know not that the soul has any need of words. Sympathy is doubtless felt through all the spiritual world, without those channels of intelligence that we must open and explore. There is joy among the

angels when a sinner repents, or a saint expires, long before the news is whispered from throne to throne, through the palaces of the skies. The thrill is more than electric. It is instant and everywhere in the empire of holy mind.

If, then, there is such conscious sympathy among the spirits of the blest, who will deny that they, whose angels do always behold the face of the Father, are also conversant with those whom they have left on earth? The dead are with us and around us, and though gone, are not lost. Wherever, in the world of spirits, God may have fixed the habitation of his throne, it is right to believe that his essential presence is everywhere, and his saints are where they can be the happiest, and best perform his high and holy will.

All this proceeds upon the doctrine, that the souls of infants do immediately pass into glory, when released from the prison of the flesh. This truth is too plainly taught in the Holy Scriptures, and is too firmly rooted in the human heart, to be doubted. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," was said by Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." The royal prophet evidently recognized this truth, when he comforted himself by the assurance that he

should meet his child again. To me it has always been a delightful truth, that these little ones are, in great kindness, transplanted to a more congenial clime, and spared the ills that they must meet and buffet in a world of sin. So that I have often said, "I thank God when an infant dies." But this is gratitude felt only when the children of others die.

Yet it is a blessed thought, that when one of our children dies in infancy, it sleeps in Jesus. We are sure of one in heaven. The rest may grow up in sin, and die in sin, and be lost, but one is safe. Thanks to God, the lost is found, the dead is alive. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "They only can be said to possess a child for ever, who have lost one in infancy."

Infinite Wisdom took him away.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." The truth of this we feel when clouds and darkness

hang around the throne. And then we listen again, and the same voice adds: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Nothing but infinite presumption would challenge the wisdom of the Divine decrees. What is man, that he should venture to doubt that He who knows all things from the beginning, before whom the future, with all its changes, is for ever present, better understands than we what is the most for his glory, and the good of his government? Could we behold the varied and benign results that, in his providence and grace, are to be the fruit of those events which we regard as painfully undesirable; could we see the glory that they will bring eventually to Him whose glory is the ultimate and righteous object of all that is, so that around the death of an infant, as around the fall of an empire, cluster considerations that bear upon the joys of saints, and the services of angels, and the honor of Him who sitteth in the heavens, God over all, we would not merely acquiesce in the *dispensation*, but we should rejoice in it with joy unspeakable. It is often the severest portion of our afflictions, that we can not see why they are sent upon us. Our

faith is demanded, that we may believe where we can not see. "What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter." "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." That faith is grounded on our knowledge that He who orders all our ways is too wise to be mistaken. His purposes are eternal. When this earth shall have become wearied with rolling, and all the stars have fallen from their places, away in the future, millions of ages beyond the judgment of the great day, the death of a babe in the house will be working out its results in the eternal purposes of God. We may not *see* till then, perhaps not then. How far off it may be, none can tell. But it is all right, and we shall find it to be so hereafter. It requires no very *exalted* order of *faith* to adopt this sentiment, and let the soul lie down on it confidingly, and look up trustingly, and smile serenely, when the hand of God presses heavily.

Oh! let my trembling soul be still,
While darkness veils this mortal eye,
And wait thy wise, Thy holy will,
Wrapped yet in tears and mystery.
I can not, Lord, thy purpose see;
Yet all is well, since ruled by thee.

Thus, trusting in thy love, I tread
The narrow path of duty on.
What though some cherished joys are fled?
What though some flattering dreams are gone?
Yet purer, brighter joys remain:
Why should my spirit then complain?

Infinite Love called the Child.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

The sovereignty of God we are bound, as his creatures, to acknowledge and adore. He has a right to do with his own what he will; and when to this we join his wisdom, it is easy to construct an argument that compels submission. So the afflicted father, whose example is our theme, was affected when he said: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." And then he cried out, under the same emotion, "Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thy hand." This is not the high-

est style of Christian confidence. It is right; but it is not the sweet and joyous trust of him who rose from the earth when his child was dead, and washed, and changed his apparel, and went into the house of God and worshipped. He is not only our God, he is our FATHER. He taught us by the lips of his Son to call him our Father; and "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth. "We have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

We have chastened our own children. We did it not in anger, much less in malice, or with a desire to do an injury to the one we loved. And when our Father's hand is laid on us, it is surely our duty to bear in mind that his love for his children infinitely excels our love for those who climb on our knees and hang on our necks. Oh! was it not love that gave the child; that gave us such a child; that made it lovely in our eyes, clothing it with beauty as with a garment, and shedding upon its form and spirit those gentle, winning ways that wound about our hearts,

and rendered the object of our affections just the child whom we would wish to keep? We blessed God for giving. But it is the same God who hath taken away. He never changes. And *faith* assures us that it is greater *love* that takes than gives. Was not the lamb his own? And did he not gather it to his own bosom? If he had not loved it, he would not have taken it. Was it not his own jewel? And did he not set it as a gem in his own crown? Let the thought of murmuring be rebuked by the following beautiful story from the Mishna of the Rabbins:

"During the absence of the Rabbi Meir, his two sons died, both of them of uncommon beauty, and enlightened in the divine law. His wife bore them to her chamber, and laid them upon her bed. When Rabbi Meir returned, his first inquiry was for his sons. His wife reached to him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, 'Where are my sons?' 'They are not far off,' she said, placing food before him that he might eat. He was in a genial mood, and when he had said grace after meat, she thus addressed him: 'Rabbi, with thy permission, I would fain propose to thee one question.' 'Ask it then, my love,' replied he. 'A few days ago, a person in-

trusted some jewels to my custody, and now he demands them; should I give them back to him?' 'This is a question,' said the Rabbi, 'which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What! wouldst thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own?' 'No,' she replied, 'but yet I thought it best not to restore them without acquainting thee therewith.' She then led him to the chamber, and, stepping to the bed, took the white covering from the dead bodies. 'Ah! my sons, my sons,' loudly lamented their father. 'My sons! the light of my eyes, and the light of my understanding: I was your father, but you were my teachers in the law.' The mother turned away and wept bitterly. At length she took her husband by the hand and said: 'Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was intrusted to our keeping? See; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.' 'Blessed be the name of the Lord,' echoed the Rabbi, 'and blessed be his holy name for ever.'"

We should esteem it a mark of honor and peculiar regard, if the king should choose one of our children to be taken into his family, and trained for the throne. There are thousands of

little children besides ours, whom God might have taken, if he had been pleased; but he loved ours so much, and loved us so much, that he came into our humble household, and gently bore away from our arms our infant child, and took him into his own family, and placed him among the brightest and best, and made him a king. There is love in that—precious love—a Father's love.

There is love in thus chastising us when we wander, and He would draw us back. I have seen a shepherd striving to drive his flock into the fold, while they would refuse to enter, and prefer to run off into the highways, where they were in danger of being torn and lost. At length, when wearied with efforts to urge them in, he takes a lamb into his arms, and folds it gently in his bosom, and walks into the inclosure, while the mother follows, and the whole flock come on, and are soon folded in the place of safety and peace. So have I seen a family whom God would win to his house and home in heaven; but they became worldly-minded, and wandered away among the dangerous paths of a deceitful, unsatisfying earth; and when his calls and commands had been lost upon them, he has taken their lamb, their pet lamb, their youngest child,

and laid it in his own bosom; and then, oh! then, how readily the mother and all the little flock have followed him to the gate of the celestial city, into which he has entered with their darling in his arms!

It was love, infinite love, that ordered such a plan; and it will be felt the more, the more the heart is softened, and the eyes are opened to behold the hand that does it.

"Before I was afflicted, I went astray." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." So David was able to say while yet in the house of his pilgrimage; and so shall we say, if not now, when we come to sit down by the river of the water of life, our children with us, broken households reünited, and talk over the trials of the way by which we have been led, and admire and adore the grace that directed the blow that laid our early hopes in ruins, blasted our fond domestic joys, buried our babes, and broke our hearts.

The Child is happier now.

We desire our children's happiness; we pray and labor for it; we are willing to make great sacrifices of our comfort to secure it for them. In sickness, we forget our own health and lives for the sake of theirs. We watch them, and toil for them, and would die for them. We more than die for them sometimes.

And if we grieve when their happiness calls them from us, our grief is selfish; it is for ourselves, and not for them, we mourn. But we should not mourn, if we knew what he has gained whom we have lost. Instantly on being released from the body, the spirit of the infant returns to God who gave it. Endowed with capacities that, if permitted to expand and improve on earth, would in fifty years, perhaps, have made him wiser than Newton, or Plato, or Solomon, it rushes into the mysteries of the Divine Mind, and, on wings of thought such as angels use in rising into the regions of knowledge that pass all understanding, he begins his flight, and stretches onward and right onward for ever. He never tires. No weakness, no sickness, no pain, to

make him pause or falter in his upward way. He bears himself into the presence of the Omniscient, becomes a disciple in the school of Christ, flies on with Moses, and David, and John, and learns from them the wonderful things of heaven, the mysteries of the kingdom; and thus, ever advancing, he rises nearer and still nearer to the comprehension of Him who is still infinitely above and beyond his last and loftiest reach. And what a change is this! Yesterday, an infant in his mother's arms, or a child amused with a rattle or a straw; to-day, a seraph in the midst of seraphim, burning with excessive glory in the presence of God.

Happiness is the fruit of holiness. Washed in the blood of the everlasting covenant, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, he is now among the holy, as happy as any who are there. Those faculties of mind, expanded in the atmosphere of heaven, are employed in the praise of that grace that called him so soon from Nature's darkness into the glorious light of *eternity;* the gloom of sin scarce shading the brightness of his rising sun, before the noon of heaven burst upon him. As if an angel had lost his way, and for a few days had wandered among the sons of men, till his companions suddenly discovered him in this

wilderness, and caught him, and bore him off to his native residence among the blessed; so the child is taken kindly in the morning of its wanderings, and gathered among the holy, and brought home to his Father's house. How pure his spirit now; how happy he is now!

> "Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there
> Around my Saviour stand;"

and among them I behold the infant forms of those whose little graves were wet with the tears of parental love. I hear their infant voices in the song. Do you see in the midst of that bright and blessed throng the child you mourn? I ask not now if you would call him back again. I fear you would! But I ask you, "*What would tempt him back again?*" Bring out the playthings that he loved on earth, the toys that filled his childish heart with gladness, and pleased him on the nursery-floor, the paradise that was ever bright when he smiled within it; hold them up, and ask him to throw away his harp, and leave the side of his new-found friends, and the bosom of his Saviour; and would he come, to be a boy again, to live and laugh and love again, to sicken, suffer, die, and *perhaps* be lost! I think he would stay. I think I would shut the door if I saw him coming.

A father, who had buried the youngest of three boys, exclaims, in words familiar:

"I can not tell what form is his,
What look he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns
His shining seraph-brow.

"The thoughts that fill his sinless soul,
The bliss that he doth feel,
Are numbered with the secret things
Which God doth not reveal.

"But I know—for God hath told me this—
That now he is at rest,
Where other blessed infants are,
On their loving Saviour's breast.

"Whate'er befalls his brethren twain,
His bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and pain,
But his is perfect peace.

"It may be that the tempter's wiles
Their souls from bliss can sever;
But if our own poor faith fail not,
He must be ours for ever.

"When we think of what our darling is,
And what he still must be;
When we think on that world's perfect bliss,
And this world's misery;

"When we groan beneath this load of sin,
And feel this grief and pain;
Oh! we'd rather lose our other two,
Than have him here again."

We shall see him again.

"I SHALL go to him, but he shall not return to me."

"Shall we know our friends in heaven?" is a question that I will not here discuss. It is to my mind obvious that the personality of each of us is to be preserved distinctly in the world to come; and whether the ties that are formed on earth are to be reünited and perpetuated there, or not, we shall undoubtedly recognize the spirit allied to our own, and that once breathed the same vital air with us. Those who have died in Christ, the Saviour will bring with him; and those who wait his appearance shall meet those they loved, when they come in the air with their glorified Lord.

Very true it is, that the Lamb in the midst of the throne is the chief attraction of heaven, and that all eyes and all hearts will turn toward him with infinite longings that are never satisfied.

A pious young man, of ardent filial affection, buried his beloved mother, and afterwards was frequently heard to say, that one of the chief pleasures he anticipated in the prospect of hea-

ven was meeting again his sainted mother. But that young man, on his death-bed, was heard to say: "It seems to me, if I am so happy as to enter heaven, that I shall wish to spend a thousand years, before I think of any thing else, in looking upon my Saviour."

Yes, blessed Saviour; and in thy bosom nestles the lamb from our fold. We can not look at thee, without beholding him. We can not think of him, without remembering thy sweet words: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

It is not, then, the illusion of fancy, it is the dictate of Christian faith, to look toward the holy city, and within its gates of pearl to see the little one that has been taken from us, now a pure beatified spirit, robed in celestial beauty, with a crown on his head, and a harp in his hand, beckoning us to come up thither.

Oh! it was sweet to hear his voice in the glee of infancy; to feel his lips as they pressed the fount of life, or met our own in the kiss of parental love; to listen to his infant prayer, or his gentle murmur, when we hummed the evening lullaby.

"His presence was like sunshine,
Sent down to gladden earth;
To comfort us in all our griefs,
And sweeten all our mirth."

But he is brighter, fairer, happier there; and we shall soon rejoin him in our Father's house, a reünited family, all the more blessed because we have been for a little while separated, and then we shall part no more for ever. This is the comfort of faith, the assurance of hope; and when we come to sit down in the mansions on high, with our children around us, those children over whose early graves we wept in bitterness, we shall be amazed to think how short has been the separation, and how blessed the love that ordered the parting, and permitted the meeting, in the presence of God.

"Oh! when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?"

Poems.

THAT name! how often every day
We spake it and we heard;
It was to us, 'mid tasks or play,
A common household word.

'Tis breathéd yet, that name; but oh!
How solemn now the sound!
One of the sanctities which throw
Such awe our homes around.

Poems on the Death of Little Children.

Little Mary.

From the group of little faces
One is gone—
In the old familiar places
Sad and lone,
Father, Mother, meek-eyed Brother,
Sit and moan.

Sit and moan for one departed,
Pure and mild,
Little Mary, gentle-hearted,
Sinless child—
And as nestling memories thicken,
Griefs grow wild.

Home once bright how cold and dreary!
Shadows deep
Fall on forms and hearts aweary,
Eyes that weep—
Thought is in the church-yard seeking
One asleep.

Still the merry laugh deceiving
Fills the ear,
Tiny arms yet fondly cleaving
Dry the tear;
Foot-falls, silvery foot-falls, patter
Far and near.

Ears instinctive, pause to hearken,
All in vain—
Days drag on and skies shall darken
O'er with pain,
But the heart will find its lost one
Ne'er again!

From the treasured fire-side faces
Here to-day,
From the tender warm embraces,
Dropped away,
Sleeps she 'mid forgotten sleepers
In the clay.

Ah! what weary numbers sighing
To be free,
Little Mary, would be lying
Low with thee!
Where no care nor eating sorrow
E'er shall be.

Weep not when ye tell the story
Of the dead—
'Tis a sunbeam joined the Glory
Overhead!
"For of such sweet babes is heaven,"
Jesus said.

My Child.

I can not make him dead!
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study-chair;
Yet, when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes—he is not there!

I walk my parlor-floor,
And, through the open door,
I hear a foot-fall on the chamber-stair;
I'm stepping toward the hall
To give the boy a call;
And then bethink me that—he is not there!

I tread the crowded street;
A satcheled lad I meet,
With the same beaming eyes and colored hair;
And as he's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that—he is not there!

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin-lid:
Closed are his eyes, cold is his forehead fair;
My hand that marble felt;
O'er it in prayer I knelt;
Yet my heart whispers that—he is not there!

I can not make him dead!
When passing by the bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye
Seek it inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that—he is not there;

When at the cool, gray break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air,
My soul goes up with joy,
To Him who gave my boy,
Then comes the sad thought that—he is not there!

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm with his mother offering up our prayer,
Or evening anthems tuning,
In spirit I'm communing
With our boy's spirit, though—he is not there!

Not there!—Where, then, is he?
The form I used to see
Was but the raiment that he used to wear!
The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked: he not there!

He lives!—In all the past
He lives; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair.
In dreams I see him now,
And, on his angel-brow,
I see it written: "Thou shalt see me there!"

Yes, we all live to God!
Father, thy chastening rod
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That in the spirit-land,
Meeting at thy right hand,
'Twill be our heaven to find that—Thou art there!

PIERPONT.

Hers was a Mother's Heart.

HERS was a mother's heart,
That poor Egyptian's, when she drew apart
Because she would not see
Her child beloved in its last agony;

When her sad load she laid,
In her despair, beneath the scanty shade
In the wild waste, and stepped
Aside, and long and passionately wept.

Yet higher, more sublime,
How many a mother since that ancient time,
Has shown the mighty power
Of love divine, in such another hour!

Oh! higher love to wait
Fast by the sufferer in his worst estate,
Nor from the eyes to hide
One pang, but aye in courage to abide.

And though no angel bring
In that dark hour unto a living spring
Of gladness—as was sent,
Stilling her voice of turbulent lament—

Oh! higher faith to show
Out of what depths of anguish and of woe
The heart is strong to raise
To an all-loving Father hymns of praise.

TRENCH.

A Sunbeam and a Shadow.

I.

I HEAR a shout of merriment,
A laughing boy I see;
Two little feet the carpet press,
And bring the child to me.

Two little arms are round my neck,
Two feet upon my knee:
How fall the kisses on my cheek;
How sweet they are to me!

II.

That merry shout no more I hear,
No laughing child I see;
No little arms are round my neck,
Nor feet upon my knee!

No kisses drop upon my cheek;
  Those lips are sealed to me.
Dear Lord, how could I give him up
  To any but to Thee!

The Child of James Melville.

Born, July 9, 1586. Died about January, 1588.

This page, if thou be a pater [parent, father] that reads it, thou wilt apardone me; if nocht, suspend thy censure till thou be a father, as said the grave Lacedæmonian, Agesilaus.—*Autobiography of James Melville.*

One time my soul was pierced as with a sword,
  Contending still with men untaught and wild,
When He who to the prophet lent his gourd,
  Gave me the solace of a pleasant child.

A summer gift my precious flower was given;
  A very summer fragrance was its life;
Its clear eyes soothed me as the blue of heaven
  When home I turned, a weary man of strife.

With unformed laughter, musically sweet,
  How soon the wakening babe would meet my kiss;
With outstretched arms its care-wrought father greet:
  Oh! in the desert what a spring was this!

A few short months it blossomed near my heart;
  A few short months—else toilsome all and sad;
But that home solace nerved me for my part,
  And of the babe I was exceeding glad!

Alas! my pretty bud, scarce formed, was dying—
(The prophet's gourd, it withered in a night!)
And He who gave me all, my heart's pulse trying,
Took gently home the child of my delight.

Not rudely culled—not suddenly it perished,
But gradual faded from our love away!
As if still, secret dews, its life that cherished,
Were drop by drop withheld, and day by day!

My blessed Master saved me from repining,
So tenderly he sued me for his own;
So beautiful he made my babe's declining,
Its dying blessed me as its birth had done!

And daily to my board at noon and even
Our fading flower I bade his mother bring,
That we might commune of our rest in heaven,
Gazing the while on death without its sting.

And of the ransom for that baby paid,
So very sweet at times our converse seemed,
That the sure truth of grief a gladness made—
Our little lamb by God's own Lamb redeemed!

There were two milk-white doves my wife had nourished;
And I too loved, erewhile, at times to stand,
Marking how each the other fondly cherished,
And fed them from my baby's dimpled hand!

So tame they grew, that, to his cradle flying,
Full oft they cooed him to his noon-tide rest;
And to the murmurs of his sleep replying,
Crept gently in, and nestled in his breast.

'Twas a fair sight—the snow-pale infant sleeping,
So fondly guardianed by those creatures mild;
Watch o'er his closed eyes their bright eyes keeping:
Wondrous the love betwixt the birds and child!

Still, as he sickened, seemed the doves too dwining,
Forsook their food, and loathed their pretty play;
And on the day he died, with sad note pining,
One gentle bird would not be frayed away.

His mother found it, when she rose sad-hearted,
At early dawn, with sense of nearing ill;
And when, at last, the little spirit parted,
The dove died too, as if of its heart's chill!

The other flew to meet my sad home-riding,
As with a human sorrow in its coo—
To my dead child and its dead mate then guiding,
Most pitifully plained, and parted too!

'Twas my first "hansel"* and "propine"† to Heaven:
And as I laid my darling 'neath the sod—
Precious His comforts—once an infant given,
And offered with two turtle-doves to God!

MRS. A. STUART MENTEATH.

* Present. † Earnest, pledge.

The Mission of the Angel of Death.

"Go forth," said the Heavenly Father,
To one of his seraph-train;
"Go forth on an errand of mercy
To the world of trouble and pain;

"And away from earth's noxious vapors
Some buds of beauty bring,
To bloom in the heavenly gardens,
'Neath the smiles of perpetual spring."

And the angel, with wings resplendent,
Went out from the heavenly band,
'Midst a chorus of joyful voices,
Resounding at God's right hand.

Slowly night's gathering shadows
Closed round a mother mild,
Who tearful, and heavy-hearted,
Watched by her dying child.

Fevered, and restless, and moaning,
On his little bed he lay,
When the bright-winged angel drew near him,
And kissed his last breath away.

So softly the chain was severed
So gently was staid the breath—
It soothed the heart of the mourner
And she blessed the angel of death.

For she knew that the soul of her darling
Had gone to his Saviour above—
Clasped in the arms more tender
Then even her fondest love.

JENETT.

Little Bessie:

AND THE WAY IN WHICH SHE FELL ASLEEP.

Hug me closer, closer, mother,
Put your arms around me tight;
I am cold and tired, mother,
And I feel so strange to-night!
Something hurts me here, dear mother,
Like a stone upon my breast;
Oh! I wonder, wonder, mother,
Why it is I can not rest!

All the day, while you were working,
As I lay upon my bed,
I was trying to be patient,
And to think of what you said;
How the kind and blessed Jesus
Loves his lambs to watch and keep;
And I wished he'd come and take me
In his arms, that I might sleep.

Just before the lamp was lighted,
Just before the children came,
While the room was very quiet,
I heard some one call my name.

All at once the window opened;
In a field were lambs and sheep;
Some from out a brook were drinking,
Some were lying fast asleep.

But I could not see the Saviour,
Though I strained my eyes to see;
And I wondered, if he saw me,
Would he speak to such as me.
In a moment I was looking
On a world so bright and fair,
Which was full of little children,
And they seemed so happy there!

They were singing, oh! how sweetly!
Sweeter songs I never heard;
They were singing sweeter, mother,
Than the sweetest singing-bird.
And while I my breath was holding,
One, so bright, upon me smiled;
And I knew it must be Jesus,
When he said, "Come here, my child.

"Come up here, my little Bessie,
Come up here and live with me,
Where the children never suffer,
But are happier than you see!"
Then I thought of all you'd told me
Of that bright and happy land:
I was going when you called me,
When you came and kissed my hand.

And at first I felt so sorry
You had called me: I would go.
Oh! to sleep and never suffer!
Mother, don't be crying so!
Hug me closer, closer, mother,
Put your arms around me tight;
Oh! how much I love you, mother,
But I feel so strange to-night!

And the mother pressed her closer
To her overburdened breast;
On the heart so near to breaking
Lay the heart so near its rest.
At the solemn hour of midnight,
In the darkness calm and deep,
Lying on her mother's bosom.
Little Bessie fell asleep.

The Little Sleeper.

No mother's eye beside thee wakes to-night,
No taper burns beside thy lonely bed,
Darkling thou liest, hidden out of sight,
And none are near thee but the silent dead.

How cheerly glows this hearth, yet glows in vain,
For we uncheered beside it sit alone,
And listen to the wild and beating rain
In angry gusts against our casement blown.

And though we nothing speak, yet well I know
That both our hearts are there, where thou dost keep
Within thy narrow chamber far below,
For the first time unwatched, thy lonely sleep.

Oh! no, not thou!—and we our faith deny,
This thought allowing: thou, removed from harms,
In Abraham's bosom dost securely lie,
Oh! not in Abraham's, in a Saviour's arms—

In that dear Lord's, who in thy worst distress,
Thy bitterest anguish, gave thee, dearest child,
Still to abide in perfect gentleness,
And like an angel to be meek and mild.

Sweet corn of wheat, committed to the ground
To die, and live, and bear more precious ear,
While in the heart of earth thy Saviour found
His place of rest, for thee we will not fear.

Sleep softly, till that blessed rain and dew,
Down lighting upon earth, such change shall bring
That all its fields of death shall laugh anew—
Yea, with a living harvest laugh and sing.

TRENCH.

Little Lucy,

AND THE SONG SHE SUNG.

I.

A LITTLE child, six summers old,
So thoughtful and so fair,
There seemed about her pleasant ways
A more than childish air,
Was sitting on a summer eve
Beneath a spreading tree,
Intent upon an ancient book,
Which lay upon her knee.

She turned each page with careful hand,
And strained her sight to see,
Until the drowsy shadows slept
Upon the grassy lea;
Then closed the book, and upwards looked,
And straight began to sing
A simple verse of hopeful love—
This very childish thing:
"While here below, how sweet to know
His wondrous love and story,
And then, though grace, to see His face,
And live with him in glory!"

II.

That little child, one dreary night
Of winter-wind and storm,
Was tossing on a weary couch
Her weak and wasted form;

And in her pain, and in its pause,
But clasped her hands in prayer—
(Strange that we had no thoughts of heaven
While hers were only there)—

Until she said: "O mother dear,
How sad you seem to be!
Have you forgotten that He said,
'Let children come to me'?
Dear mother, bring the blessed Book,
Come, mother, let us sing."
And then again, with faltering tongue,
She sung that childish thing:
"While here below, how sweet to know
His wondrous love and story,
And then, through grace, to see His face,
And live with him in glory!"

III.

Underneath a spreading tree
A narrow mound is seen,
Which first was covered by the snow,
Then blossomed into green;
Here first I heard that childish voice
That sings on earth no more;
In heaven it hath a richer tone,
And sweeter than before:
For those who know His love below—
So runs the wondrous story—
In heaven, through grace, shall see his face
And dwell with him in glory!

The Good Shepherd.

When on my ear your loss was knelled,
And tender sympathy upburst,
A little rill from memory swelled,
Which once had soothed my bitter thirst.

And I was fain to bear to you
Some portion of its mild relief,
That it might be as healing dew,
To steal some fever from your grief.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of death,
Like a long twilight, haunting lay;

And friends came round with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift removè,
This story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love:

"They in the valley's sheltering care
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare,
The Shepherd strives to make them climb

"To airy shelves of pasture green,
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mists the sunbeams slide.

"But naught can tempt the timid things
The steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the Shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie,

"Till in his arms the lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go;
Then, heedless of the rifts and breaks,
They follow on o'er rock and snow.

"And in those pastures lifted fair,
More dewy soft than lowland mead,
The Shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed."

This parable, by Nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south wind free
O'er frozen brooks, that float, unsheathed
From icy thraldom, to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the Good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the stony way,

Holding our little lamb asleep;
And like the burden of the sea
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, "Arise and follow me."

MARIA LOWELL.

The Little Boy that Died.

I am all alone in my chamber now,
And the midnight hour is near;
And the faggot's crack and the clock's dull tick
Are the only sounds I hear;
And over my soul in its solitude,
Sweet feelings of sadness glide,
For my heart and my eyes are full when I think
Of the little boy that died.

I went one night to my father's house,
Went home to the dear ones all,
And softly I opened the garden-gate,
And softly the door of the hall.
My mother came out to meet her son—
She kissed me, and then she sighed,
And her head fell on my neck, and she wept
For the little boy that died.

I shall miss him when the flowers come,
In the garden where he played;
I shall miss him more by the fire-side,
When the flowers have all decayed.
I shall see his toys and his empty chair,
And the horse he used to ride;
And they will speak with a silent speech,
Of the little boy that died.

We shall go home to our Father's house—
To our Father's house in the skies,
Where the hope of our souls shall have no blight,
Our love no broken ties.
We shall roam on the banks of the river of peace,
And bathe in its blissful tide;
And one of the joys of our heaven shall be
The little boy that died.

"O MOURNER! who, with tender love,
Hast wept beside some infant grave,
Hast thou not sought a Friend above,
Who died thy little one to save?

"Then lift thy weary weeping eye
Above the waves that round thee swell;
Is not thy darling safe on high?
Canst thou not whisper, It is well?

"Yes, it is well—though never more
His infant form to earth be given;
He rests where sin and grief are o'er,
And thou shalt meet thy child in heaven."

Little Willie's Last Words.

"SURELY JESUS CHRIST DIED TO SAVE US."

THE Sabbath-day was nearly spent,
The week that Willie died,
And o'er his pillow still we bent,
Or kneeling at his side
We watched the waves that came and went
In life's fast-ebbing tide.

Through all the silent hours—the deep,
Deep silence of our woe—
We watched, with eyes that could not weep,
The parting spirit go;
We heard the moanings of his sleep,
His breathing faint and slow.

But ere his upward flight he took,
The fevered slumber broke;
His mind the troubled dream forsook;
Our dying Willie woke;
And with an earnest heavenward look,
These precious words he spoke:

"The blessed Jesus surely died
To save us from our sin."
He said no more, nor turned aside
His gaze, that pierced within
Those gates of glory opened wide,
Where soon he entered in.

* * * * *

I thank thee, Father! Lord of light,
That, hidden from the wise,
Thou hast revealed to infant sight
The secrets of the skies.
Yea, Father! even so, for right
It seemeth in thine eyes.

I thank and praise, O Saviour Christ!
Thy mercy rich and free,
That six short cloudless years sufficed
To bring our child to thee;
Thus early to thine arms enticed,
Suffered thy face to see.

And when the holy and the just,
Who taketh what he gave,
Shall call me to that sacred dust
Reposing in the grave,
Be mine as sure and simple trust
That Jesus died to save.

C. W. B.

On The Death of a Child.

Wherefore should I make my moan,
Now the darling child is dead?
He to rest is early gone,
He to paradise is fled!
I shall go to him, but he
Never shall return to me.

God forbids his longer stay,
  God recalls the precious loan!
He hath taken him away,
  From my bosom to his own.
Surely what he wills is best;
Happy in his will I rest.

Faith cries out, "It is the Lord!
  Let him do what seems him good:
Be thy holy name adored,
  Take the gift a while bestowed;
Take the child, no longer mine;
Thine he is, for ever thine!"

CHARLES WESLEY.

Let us pray.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will prevail to make,
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parchéd grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear:
We kneel, how weak!—we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?

The Death of a Wife.

BY

WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D.D.

Words of Scripture.

I AM the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. Surely against me is he turned, he turneth his hand against me all the day.—LAMENTATIONS 1 : 2, 3.

He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow. He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.—LAMENTATIONS 3 : 12, 13.

He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.—LAMENTATIONS 3 : 15.

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger?—LAMENTATIONS 1 : 12.

And I said, my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord; remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.—LAMENTATIONS 3 : 18–22.

It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him, he is filled full with reproach. For the Lord will not cast off for ever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.—LAMENTATIONS 3 : 26–33.

The Death of a Wife.

It is the ordinance of God that fallen humanity and affliction should be bound together by an indissoluble tie. No one liveth, no one ever lived, an entire stranger to pain and suffering. This common feature in our earthly lot results from the operation of a universal cause—all suffer, because all inherit a sinful nature. There is doubtless, a great difference in the sufferings of different individuals; but probably it has respect more to the kind, than the degree, of suffering; and if we leave out of view those calamities which men immediately bring upon themselves by their follies and vices, and limit ourselves to those which result necessarily from the nature we bear, and the relations we sustain, I imagine we shall find that the amount of suffering allotted

to different individuals, is dealt out in much greater equality than we are accustomed to suppose.

Of all the forms that affliction takes on, none is more common than bereavement. The reason of this is, that death is always abroad, doing his work; and as we are united to each other in endearing relations, he rarely strikes a blow that does not break cherished ties, and blast fond hopes, and perhaps leave some habitation desolate. While bereavement, in any form, is to be regarded as an affliction, the character of the affliction is modified by the nature of the relation which is sundered; and though it may be difficult to decide, in many cases, what form of bereavement will make the heart bleed most freely, yet those who have had an ample and varied experience on the subject will render a united testimony to the fact, that the dissolution of one tie produces a very *different* effect upon the heart of the mourner, from the dissolution of another. It must be acknowledged that there are a few families that seem remarkably exempt from bereavement, but it is sure to come at last; and when Death begins with such a household, he is likely to number several victims in quick succession. The very fact that they have been

spared long together, is evidence that their deaths will not be far apart.

But a little while since, I was a visitor in a dwelling in which there seemed to be as much of domestic enjoyment, as it has ever been my privilege to witness. The heads of the family were models of conjugal and parental affection and dignity. The children were beautiful examples of filial obedience and love. The brothers and sisters exhibited towards each other a loving but delicate familiarity. Even the servants showed by their deferential and confiding manner, that they felt the influence of the kindly and healthful atmosphere that surrounded them. There was cheerfulness without frivolity, there was seriousness without austerity, there was devotion without enthusiasm, there was a genial, generous freedom, without the semblance of any thing to dishonor any one of the domestic relations. My visit in that family was delightful. After I came away, it was often in my mind, as a beautiful image of that great family of which Christ himself is the Head.

I knew, indeed, that every one of its members was mortal ; and yet I half yielded to the delusion, that so much grace and loveliness, and tenderness and dignity as I had seen there, would

be almost enough to keep the monster away Had I been obliged to answer the question, which of all the loved and loving ones it would be the hardest to spare from that dwelling, I should probably have felt constrained to say, "the female head." But there was not one among them all that promised better for life than she. Half a century had not withered the roses upon her cheeks. She moved about with as graceful and elastic a step as the youngest of her daughters. Her spirits were buoyant, her face was like bright sunshine, and not one wrinkle had come to announce that the evening of her day was drawing nigh. But not many months had elapsed from the time of my visit, before I heard that disease was in that dwelling, and the wife and mother was the subject; and *that* was quickly succeeded by the intelligence that death had followed in its footsteps, and that the wife and mother was the victim. In what I shall now write upon the dissolution of the conjugal relation, I shall keep this affecting instance of bereavement in my eye; though I shall endeavor to give my remarks, so far as I can, a general application.

Let me dwell a little on

THE GRIEF WHICH THE DEATH OF A WIFE OCCASIONS:

THE CONSOLATION WHICH IT DEMANDS:

THE DUTIES WHICH IT INCULCATES:

I know, indeed, that the conjugal relation is not always a channel of blessing—on the contrary, it is sometimes perverted to purposes of unmixed evil; and its dissolution, however, in some of its aspects, it may fill the survivor's heart with agony, can not but be regarded as bringing a release from an intolerable burden. But it is not with such cases that I have to do at present. I refer to those only in which the dignity of the conjugal relation is, in some good degree, maintained, and its legitimate ends secured; and in respect to such, I may say, without the fear of contradiction, that the disruption of this tender tie is always the occasion of deep sorrow.

The relation which exists between the husband and wife is, in the order of both time and nature, anterior to any other of the domestic relations. And not only has it received the most impressive sanction of Divine authority, but the Bible has clearly given it the precedence of even that which exists between parents and children; for Jesus himself hath said that "a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." Is it possible then, that so sacred a relation can

be sundered, without stirring the innermost sensibilities of the heart? Can a man be parted from his own flesh, and not feel the dividing stroke?

Then again, who that has not had the experience, can form any adequate conception of the tenderness of the conjugal tie; of the bright hopes, the grateful associations, the endearing sympathies, that pertain to it? The husband has found in his wife a safe depository of his plans, his cares, his anxieties, his hopes, his griefs, and his joys. He has confided to her what he would venture to whisper in no other ear. He has often welcomed her affectionate counsels, and found in them both light and strength. In his hours of sickness and weariness, she has watched around him and administered to him, like some heaven-commissioned angel. To her willing and efficient coöperation, he owes much of the success which has crowned his efforts in the station in which Providence has placed him. When his engagements have called him from home, the thought of her affectionate interest in all that pertains to him, cheers him in his absence and hastens his return. In short, he associates her with every thing that touches his sensibilities, awakens his hopes, or employs his efforts. And

can it be that he can see this "lover and friend put far from" him into the "darkness" of the grave, without feeling a pang in his inmost soul? Can his most cherished associations thus be broken, and the very current of his life disturbed, without his being bowed under the burden of sorrow?

This departed wife has probably been a mother—she exercised the utmost vigilance and care in the education of her children so long as she was spared to them; but who shall perform those delicate and difficult and tender offices towards them, now that she is gone? The bereaved husband feels that his parental charge has suddenly been doubled. As he sees them going away to weep alone, because they are motherless, or lingering about the coffin with bursting hearts, because they can not stay away from it, his heart sinks within him, under a consciousness of his inability to carry out their mother's wishes in training them up to virtue and usefulness. Thus the affection which he bears for his children heightens his grief that they are left without a mother.

I have no occasion to draw upon imagination to represent the deep sorrow of a bereaved husband; for I can not throw my thoughts back

into the past, but such cases multiply upon me, almost without a limit. I have in my mind one which, perhaps, witnesses to the truth of what I am saying, as well as any other I can think of. I was called to visit a family in which it was understood that the wife and mother was just falling into the monster's hands. The husband met me at the door, and said, with a bewildered and half-maniac look: "My wife is dead, sir; come and see for yourself; she is dead." I besought him to compose himself; but I quickly saw that I had to do with a mind that was unstrung. I attempted to speak of the consolation that there is in Christ; but the ability to comprehend and apply was gone. Though I doubt not that he was a true Christian, yet such was his nervous sensibility, and such the strength of his conjugal attachment, that the affliction, coming suddenly as it did, was an overmatch for all the power of endurance he could command. He gradually recovered from the shock; but it was long, long before the deep lines of sorrow began to wear out from his countenance. His departed wife—he talked of her by day; he dreamed of her by night; he cherished every thing that was associated with her memory; he took lonely walks where they had been accus-

tomed to walk together; and nowhere did he feel more at home than beside her grave. That afflicted husband's experience was, by no means, singular—if it was, in some respects, extreme, it may fairly represent the anguish that pertains to this kind of bereavement.

Let me then next speak of

The Consolation which such an Affliction demands.

The severity of an affliction is always the measure of consolation that is needed to sustain us under it. When the affliction is comparatively light, we feel less sensibly the need of sustaining and comforting grace; but when it comes upon us with a crushing weight, and makes the future seem so dark that we shudder to contemplate it, we must have "strong consolation" to keep us from sinking under it. Surely then, such an affliction as that we are now considering, in order to be endured patiently, peacefully, profitably, must be greatly qualified and softened by those blessed consolations which have their source in the heart of Infinite Love.

Let me say here, to prevent misapprehension, that it is none but a *Christian* husband to whom the Gospel offers its peculiar consolations in the

hour of bereavement; for, inasmuch as they suppose the existence of a trusting and sanctified spirit, it were impossible that any other than a true Christian should appropriate them. An ungodly husband, when God's afflicting hand is thus laid upon him, is indeed called to reflection and repentance, and faith in the Redeemer, that he may be prepared to receive the proffered consolation of the Gospel; but until the renovating process has passed upon him, there is no source of substantial comfort open to him in the universe: and though the lenient hand of time may gradually soothe his sorrows, he passes through the affliction a stranger to the sustaining power of God's truth and spirit. When I speak then of the consolation which the mourning husband needs to keep him from sinking in the deep waters, I would have it distinctly understood that not even Christianity herself can supply it to one who has not previously yielded to her enlightening and sanctifying influence.

The bereaved husband mourns, because the desire of his eyes is removed from him; because not so much another, but a part of himself, has been turned into a clod and laid away in the grave. The joys of the past, to which his wife has so liberally contributed; the burdens of the

past which her kindly sympathy has helped to alleviate; the sweet hopes and anticipations of the past in which they have been mutual sharers—all these come rushing in a tide of deep sorrow upon the memory and the heart; and the stricken mourner feels that earth can supply no antidote to his grief. The troubled spirit asks, first of all, "Whither has she fled, and is there any hope of a meeting hereafter?" And though Reason and Philosophy are dumb to such inquiries, Christianity answers them with a divine authority—she assures that bereaved husband that the loved one whom he mourns has passed the veil only to mingle in bright realities; that where she is, there is no sin nor death, but perfect purity and everlasting life; that the grave is only a quiet resting-place for her body on its way to heaven; and that, in the course of a few years at longest, he may hope to be joined with her in a blessed fellowship that Death can never invade. Are not these precious truths, which are written in the Bible as with a sun-beam, just what he needs to endure his great trial with composure and dignity? Is it not enough for him to know that she who is dead still lives, and that that countenance upon which he is looking for the last time on earth shall hereafter be animated

with celestial brightness, and that they shall be united again, not indeed in the same relation which has just been dissolved, but in the purer, nobler fellowship of heaven?

Every case in which this affliction occurs is marked by its own peculiar circumstances; and sometimes they are such as to add not a little to its bitterness. More than once have I heard the sorrowful survivor exclaim, referring to some peculiarity of his own case: "*That* it is that occasions the sharpest pang—had it not been for that one circumstance, I could have borne it with comparative composure." But here comes in the very truth which that agonized heart needs more to feel: that a God of infinite wisdom and goodness, a Father who afflicts not willingly, but for his children's benefit, has ordained every circumstance attending the event as truly as the event itself; and that not one bitter ingredient has been infused into the cup which could have been dispensed with, in consistency with the best interests of him to whom it has been administered. Is it not enough for thee to know that it is a Father's hand that is thus causing thine heart to bleed; that it is because he loves thee that he thus chastens thee; and that he has put his all-sustaining grace, which can render any burden light, at thy command?

There is, perhaps, no circumstance that serves more to aggravate such an affliction than the fact of there being a family of young children left without a mother. Hitherto, the father, when he has looked round upon these objects of his affection, has felt that the responsible and delightful charge was shared with him by another; by one too, who was, in some respects, far better qualified than himself to give direction to an immortal mind, especially in the first unfolding of its faculties. And now that he feels that the arm of his own strength is half-palsied by her removal, though his parental duties have become proportionably more arduous, how much of comfort and resolution does he need to have imparted to him in view of this sad change! Well, here again he is met with the assurance of all-sufficient Grace. Even in these most trying circumstances, he has a right to appropriate the Saviour's promise—"My grace shall be sufficient for thee;" and with that grace operating in his heart, he will find himself fully adequate to his added duties. Trust in the Lord, thou bereaved husband, and thou mayest hope that those children will grow up as olive plants round about thee, and that they will live to comfort and bless thee while their mother sleeps in the grave. Remember that though she

who bore them is dead, God, their heavenly Father, lives, and let not thine heart be troubled.

It only remains to advert to

The Duties which such an Affliction inculcates.

It conveys to the bereaved husband a most impressive charge, to beware of idolatrous attachments, and to fix his affections more firmly upon the things that are above. The event which has occurred has blasted, it may be in the twinkling of an eye, his fondest earthly hopes. She who was the keeper of his secrets, the light of his dwelling, the joy of his life, has had her countenance changed, and been sent away; and according to the measure of happiness that was procured for him by her life, is the bitterness of the cup which is administered to him in her death. What a lesson this of the vanity of earthly hopes, of the utter uncertainty that hangs about the future, of the folly of ultimately trusting to any thing short of God's own all-sufficiency! And what an impressive call to rise up to a higher sense of Christian obligation; to endeavor to attain a more spiritual mind, and thus secure to our Heavenly Father's discipline its legitimate effect! Thou sorrow-stricken hus-

band, that burden that rests upon thy heart, that desolation that reigns in thy dwelling, speaks to thee of the glorious world unseen; and it bids thee, by devout contemplation and living faith, become more familiar with that world, to which thy heart is now bound by a new and most tender tie. Rely on it, thou wilt not have accomplished God's purpose in this affliction, if it does not brighten all thy graces, and render thy Christian example both more attractive and more effective.

Such a bereavement should also lead one to gird himself for meeting other afflictions, which may await him in the future. Be it so that, according to the common course of events, he may not expect another affliction equally heart-rending; yet if he lives long, affliction in some form or other certainly awaits him; and be it what it may, he will need a previous discipline of his spirit, in order that he may be prepared for it. To this preparatory discipline, the bitter scene through which he is now passing, calls him. Remember, O man! whilst thou art looking on that loved face, over which death's withering hand has passed, or whilst thou art standing by that grave from which thy tender recollections will not let thee stay long away—remember that

thou mayest live to see thy children or other beloved friends die; and that then, as now, thou wilt need to have thy heart braced against the fearful shock. Let thy present experience be the means of fortifying thee against the power of adversity, come in whatever form it may. Possibly, thy future life may be so brief that all thy dear friends may live to see thee die, and then this bereavement will be the last in the history of thy pilgrimage; but that which constitutes the appropriate preparation for suffering is no less the appropriate preparation for dying; and thy business here in the furnace is to get ready for walking through the dark valley. Let thy present mourning, then, prepare thee not only for future mourning, but for that gloomy passage which thou hast yet to make out of this world of sorrow.

Should not the effect of such a bereavement also be, to awaken and cherish a heart-felt sympathy with others who are smarting under the rod? Yours is not the only heart that is capable of bleeding. You are not the only one whose dwelling is invaded by death. You live in a world which is, at present, under the dominion of the king of terrors; a world in which groans and tears and graves attest that tender relations

never last long. You are taking a lesson, in what you now experience, of the value of human sympathy, while you are acquiring that deep, practical knowledge which will qualify you to be at once a counsellor and a comforter to others who are in sorrow. Hereafter, then, reckon it as a duty which God requires at your hands — and the more for his having taught you so well how to perform it — to weep with them that weep. Not only when the conjugal tie, but when any other endearing relationship is dissolved, or indeed when any severe affliction — no matter of what sort — overtakes a fellow-mortal, turn your ear towards the grave of your wife, and you shall hear a voice charging you to do what you can to wipe away those flowing tears.

Suppose there are motherless children remaining, what new and arduous duties does this circumstance devolve upon the surviving parent! I have already spoken of this as serving, in one sense, to heighten his sorrow, while yet in another it may help to soothe it; but certainly it imposes upon him a new obligation to conduct their education with the utmost vigilance and fidelity. You surely can not remember what their mother was to them once, without striving to make up for their loss, by your increased fidelity so far as

you can. You can not think of the voice that used to counsel them as hushed, of the hand that used to guide them as palsied, of the countenance that used to beam upon them in loving smiles as hid in the darkness of the sepulchre, without recognizing amidst all this a solemn charge, coming up, as it were, from the heart that has now ceased to beat, to do nothing to peril the interests of those children, to neglect nothing that will be likely to promote them. And I must not omit to say, that even your wounded sensibility may be perverted to their injury—the very fact that they are without a mother may lead you to be too lenient towards their faults, and too indulgent to their wishes; but against this you must guard with scrupulous care. You must bear in mind that you most effectually fall in with the design of Providence, as well as render the best tribute to the memory of your departed wife, when you adopt that course towards your children which will best serve to develop their faculties, and form them to a virtuous character and a life of Christian usefulness.

I will only add, that a husband upon whom the hand of God has thus fallen, should maintain the utmost personal circumspection. Let him remember that he is sacredly bound to improve

the affliction for the benefit of others as well as of himself; and that whether that end is accomplished or not, must depend, in no small degree, on the spirit that breathes in his every-day deportment. I have known men, and good men, who have dishonored their character as husbands, I may say as Christians, by the lack of prudence and dignity in the circumstances which I am supposing. Through the influence of an excitable temperament, or perhaps of unfavorable associations, they have been led to do that for which they have been stigmatized as indiscreet, if not heartless, mourners. Let no such imputation even be whispered against *you*. Wherever you are, forget not that the world look upon you as a bereaved husband. Let your example be marked by so much consideration, and prudence, and piety, that none shall have aught to say against it—that all shall be instructed and profited by it.

But I can not bring these remarks to a close, without being reminded that they have by no means a universal application. I have been supposing that both the husband who mourns, and the wife who is mourned for, are the disciples of Christ; that the latter has gone to be for ever with the Lord, while the former remains to wit-

ness to a good profession. But need I say that there are cases innumerable of a sadly opposite character? Art thou a Christian husband, mourning for a wife who never felt the heavings of godly sorrow, or the joys of living faith? I wonder not that thine heart is thrice broken, and that, go where thou wilt, that dying look brings anguish to thy soul; but still the truth that God reigns and does all things well, remains to thee; and it becomes thee to bow in reverent submission, and seek consolation here. Art thou an ungodly husband, bereaved of a Christian wife, who set before thee a bright example, and upon whose last breath a prayer for thy salvation died away; and dost thou now think of her as living and shining among the angels? But canst thou bear the thought of an eternal separation? Canst thou take along with thee into future scenes of adversity, the reflection that thou hast practically determined that that last prayer should not be answered? Wouldst thou rather that thy wife should come as a bright ministering angel around thy death-bed, or be summoned as a swift witness against thee in the judgment?

Poems.

I.

O Life! O Death! O World! O Time!
O Grave, where all things flow!
'Tis yours to make our lot sublime,
With your great weight of woe.

II.

Though sharpest anguish hearts may wring,
Though bosoms torn may be,
Yet suffering is a holy thing:
Without it, what were we? TRENCH.

Poems on the Death of a Wife.

The Dead Wife.

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou couldst mortal be;
It never through my mind had passed
That time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou shouldst smile no more.

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again;
And still the thought I will not brook
That I must look in vain!
But when I speak—thou dost not say,
What thou ne'er left unsaid;
And now I feel as well I may,
Dear Mary, thou art dead!

If thou wouldst stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold and all serene—
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been.
While e'en thy chill bleak corse I have
Thou seemest still my own;
But there, I lay thee in thy grave—
And I am now alone;

I do not think, where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me:
And I perhaps may soothe this heart
In thinking too of thee;
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore!

WOLFE.

Sleep On, My Love.

Sleep on, my love, in thy cold bed
Never to be disquieted!
My last good night! thou wilt not wake
Till I thy fate shall overtake:
Till age, or grief, or sickness must
Marry my body to that dust
It so much loves; and fill the room
My heart keeps empty in thy tomb.
Stay for me there; I will not fail
To meet thee in that hollow vale.

And think not much of my delay,
I am already on the way,
And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.
Each minute is a short degree,
And every hour a step towards thee.
At night when I betake to rest,
Next morn I rise nearer my west
Of life, almost by eight hours' sail,
Than when sleep breathed his drowsy gale.
Thus from the sun my bottom steers
And my day's compass downward bears:
Nor labor I to stem the tide
Through which to thee I swiftly glide.
'Tis true, with shame and grief I yield,
Thou like the van first tooks't the field,
And gotten first the victory
In thus adventuring to die
Before me, whose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But hark! my pulse, like a soft drum,
Beats my approach, tells thee I come;
And slow howe'er my marches be,
I shall at last sit down with thee.
The thought of this bids me go on,
And wait my dissolution
With hope and comfort: Dear, (forgive
The crime,) I am content to live
Divided with but half a heart,
Till we shall meet and never part.

HENRY KING, (1699.)

Farewell.

Lie down in peace to take thy rest!
  Dear cherished form! no longer mine,
But bearing in thy clay-cold breast
  A hidden germ of life divine,
Which, when the eternal spring shall bloom,
Will burst the shackles of the tomb.

Lie down in peace to take thy rest!
  Unbroken will thy slumbers be,
Satan can now no more molest,
  And Death has done its worst for thee.
Lie down thy hallowed sleep to take
Till clothed with glory thou shalt wake.

Lie down in peace to take thy rest!
  We can no longer watch thy bed,
But glorious angels, spirits blest,
  Shall guard thee day and night instead;
And when thine eyes unclosed shall be,
Christ in his glory they shall see.

Lie down in peace to take thy rest!
  My eyes must weep—my heart must mourn;
But to thy soul, with Jesus blest,
  For comfort and for hope I turn:
Thou wilt not mark these tears that flow;
Sorrow can never reach thee now.

Lie down in peace to take thy rest!
Let me betake myself to prayer,
Bending Faith's corselet on my breast,
Lest Satan find an entrance there:
God gave;—though now his gift he claim,
Still blessed be his holy name!

BARTON.

The Dying Wife to Her Husband.

THEY tell me life is waning fast,
And Death's dark wing unfurled,
Will bear my spirit soon from earth,
Unto an unknown world;
I feel, beloved, it must be so—
I feel that even now
His hand is on my fluttering heart,
His shadow o'er my brow.

How shall I leave thee?—how resign
Thy tenderness and care?
The pressure of thy clasping hand,
Thy blessing and thy prayer!
Together we have tasted joy,
Together wept in ill,
And the love that was so bright in bliss,
In grief was brighter still.

Wilt thou not miss me from thy side,
When twilight's hour hath come?
Will it not seem a desert place,
The paradise of home?
Then, gather close with brooding love
Our children round thy knee,
And wipe with tenderest hand the tears
Which they will shed for me.

And soothe each little throbbing heart
That asks for me in vain,
And say, that in the far-off heaven
Their mother lives again;
Link not my name with thought of death,
But point them to the sky,
And tell them in the "Better Land"
They neither weep nor die.

Go with them to their lonely couch
At evening's silent close,
And softly press each pillowed cheek,
And hush them to repose:
Or bid them kneel with claspéd hands
To lisp their evening prayer:
Thou must unite a father's love,
With all a mother's care.

A mother's care! a mother's love!
And must they never know
How deeply in her "heart of hearts"
A mother's love may glow?

Will they yet bloom in girlhood fair,
While she who gave them birth
Lies all forgotten far away,
In one lone spot of earth?

Forgotten! no, beloved one, no!
Thou wilt remember still
The being who hath shared thy lot,
Alike in good or ill;
Thou wilt remember all her love,
With faithful, fond regret;
And but the faults she could not hide,
Thy heart will e'er forget.

And thou wilt come to that lone spot
Where the green willow waves,
And lead our children's tiny feet
Among the quiet graves;
And read for them the sculptured stone—
Brief record of my life—
Then say how faithfully I loved,
As mother and as wife.

How can I say farewell to thee?
How mark thy bitter tears?
Look up, beloved, we only part
For a few fleeting years;
They will roll o'er thy darkened path
Swiftly as shadows flee,
And in a world of holier love
Will our blest meeting be.

The Coming of the Master.

Rise, said the Master, come unto the feast:
  She heard the call, and rose with willing feet;
  But thinking it not otherwise than meet
For such a bidding to put on her best,
She is gone from us for a few short hours
  Into her bridal-closet, there to wait
  For the unfolding of the palace-gate,
That gives her entrance to the blissful bowers.
We have not seen her yet, though we have been
  Full often to her chamber-door, and oft
Have listened underneath the postern green,
  And laid fresh flowers, and whispered short and soft:
But she hath made no answer, and the day
From the clear west is fading fast away!

Henry Alford.

The Father to His Motherless Children.

Come gather closer to my side,
  My little smitten flock—
And I will tell of him who brought
  Pure water from the rock;
Who boldly led God's people forth
  From Egypt's wrath and guile—
He once a cradled babe did float
  All helpless on the Nile.

You're weary, precious ones—your eyes
Are wandering far and wide;
Think ye of her who knew so well
Your tender thoughts to guide?
Who could to Wisdom's sacred lore
Your fixed attention claim—
Oh! never from your hearts erase
That blessed Mother's name.

'Tis time to sing your evening hymn—
My youngest infant dove,
Come press thy velvet cheek to mine,
And learn the lay of love.
My sheltering arm can clasp you all,
My poor deserted throng;
Cling as you used to cling to her
Who sings the angels' song.

Begin, sweet birds, the accustomed strain—
Come, warble loud and clear—
Alas! alas! you're weeping all,
You're sobbing in my ear.
Good-night, go say the prayer she taught,
Beside your little bed;
The lips that used to bless you there
Are silent with the dead.

A father's hand your course may guide
Amid the thorns of life—
His care protect these shrinking plants
That dread the storms of life;

But who upon your infant heart
Shall like that mother write?
Who touch the springs that rule the soul?
Dear mourning babes, good-night.

L. H. SIGOURNEY.

The Mystery of Chastisement.

WITHIN this leaf, to every eye
So little worth, doth hidden lie
Most rare and subtle fragrancy:

Wouldst thou its secret strength unbind?
Crush it, and thou shalt perfume find,
Sweet as Arabia's spicy wind.

In this dull stone, so poor, and bare
Of shape or lustre, patient care
Will find for thee a jewel rare.

But first must skillful hands essay,
With file and flint, to clear away
The film, which hides its fire from day.

This leaf? this stone? It is thy heart,
It must be crushed by pain and smart,
It must be cleansed by sorrow's art—

Ere it will yield a fragrance sweet,
Ere it will shine a jewel meet,
To lay before thy dear Lord's feet.

WILBERFORCE.

The Mystery of Providence.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his vast designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

COWPER.

Thou art gone to the Grave.

Thou art gone to the grave! but we will not deplore thee,
Though sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb;
The Saviour hath passed through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of His love is thy guide through the gloom.

Thou art gone to the grave! we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough paths of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of Mercy are spread to enfold thee,
And sinners may die, for the Sinless hath died.

Thou art gone to the grave! and, its mansion forsaking,
What though thy weak spirit in fear lingered long?
The sunshine of Paradise beamed on thy waking,
And the sound which thou heardst, was the seraphim's song.

Thou art gone to the grave! but we will not deplore thee,
For God was thy Ransom, thy Guardian, and Guide:
He gave thee, he took thee, and he will restore thee;
And Death has no sting, for the Saviour hath died.

HEBER.

The Safe Repose.

REPOSE, then, precious clay!
Thou art in safer custody than mine,
The purchase of atoning blood! What though
The sods of earth now cover thee, and rage

The elements around thee? Angels watch
The sleeping dust; nay, more, Omnipotence
Is th' invisible Guardian of thy tomb!
JESUS! the Mighty Conqueror of Death,
Who felt its power and plucked its sting away,
Drying our tears, addresses us in words
Which glow with immortality: "Fear not!
For I am He that liveth and was dead.
Behold! I am alive for evermore;
And in my hand retain the keys of Death!"
Then looking forward through the dim perspective
Of this dark vale of weeping, let the eye
Rest on the splendors of that cloudless morn,
When the Archangel's pealing notes shall startle
A slumb'ring earth; the sea and land restore
At the loud summons what they hold in trust,
And o'er a renovated world resound
The pæans of eternal victory!

"WELLS OF BACA."

Grateful for Chastisement.

MUCH have I born, but not as I should bear:
The proud will unsubdued, the formal prayer,
Tell me thou yet wilt chide, thou canst not spare,
O Lord! thy chastening rod.

Oh! help me, Father! for my sinful heart
Back from this discipline of grief would start,
Unmindful of His sorer, deeper smart,
Who died for me, my God!

Yet, if each wish denied, each woe and pain,
Break but some link of that oppressive chain
Which binds me still to earth, and leaves a stain
Thou only canst remove—

Then am I blest, O bliss from man concealed!
If here to Christ, the weak one's tower and shield,
My heart, through sorrow, be set free to yield
A service of deep love.

Thy Will be done.

Thy will be done! I will not fear
The fate provided by thy love;
Though clouds and darkness shroud me here,
I know that all is bright above.

The stars of heaven are shining on,
Though these frail eyes are dimmed with tears;
The hopes of earth indeed are gone,
But are not ours the immortal years?

Father, forgive the heart that clings,
Thus trembling, to the things of time;
And bid my soul, on angel-wings,
Ascend into a purer clime.

There shall no doubts disturb its trust,
No sorrows dim celestial love;
But these afflictions of the dust,
Like shadows of the night, remove.

E'en now, above there's radiant day,
While clouds and darkness brood below;
Then, Father, joyful on my way
To drink the bitter cup I go.

J. ROSCOE.

The One Prayer.

ONE prayer I have—all prayers in one—
When I am wholly Thine;
Thy will, my God, thy will be done,
And let that will be mine.

All-wise, almighty, and all-good,
In thee I firmly trust;
Thy ways, unknown or understood,
Are merciful and just.

May I remember that to thee
Whate'er I have I owe;
And back, in gratitude, from me
May all thy bounties flow.

And though thy wisdom takes away,
Shall I arraign thy will?
No, let me bless thy name, and say,
"The Lord is gracious still."

A pilgrim through the earth I roam,
Of nothing long possessed,
And all must fail when I go home,
For this is not my rest.

MONTGOMERY.

Wholly Resigned.

CHRIST leads us through no darker rooms
Than he went through before.
He that into God's kingdom comes,
Must enter by this door.
Come, Lord, when grace hath made me meet
Thy blessed face to see;
For if thy work on earth be sweet,
What will thy glory be!

Then I shall end my sad complaints,
And weary, sinful days,
And join with the triumphant saints
That sing Jehovah's praise.
My knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim,
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all
And I shall be with him.

BAXTER.

Nearer, my God, to Thee.

Nearer, my God, to thee—
  Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
  That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
  Nearer to thee!

Though like a wanderer,
  The sun gone down,
Darkness comes over me,
  My rest a stone,
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee—
  Nearer to thee!

There let my way appear
  Steps unto heaven;
All that Thou sendest me
  In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee!
  Nearer to thee!

Then with my waking thoughts
  Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
  Bethel I'll raise;

So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee—
Nearer to Thee!

And when on joyful wing,
Cleaving the sky;
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee—
Nearer to thee!

Submission.

Nowhere canst thou so magnify thy God
As in the furnace-fires! Submissive tears
Wrung from the grieved yet unrepining heart,
In silent eloquence proclaim the power
Of Christian faith; a living evidence
Of love, a jewel for Immanuel's crown
Prepared. Of old, when Salem's temple rose
In strange majestic silence, "neither hammer
Nor sound of axe, nor other tool, was heard"
Within the stately fabric: So at times
The hammer of affliction scarce the stone
May feel, and yet 'tis polished and made meet
For the Great Builder's use; the spirit wafted,
Like Israel's prophet in his car of fire,

Upwards to glory, tasting scarce the pangs
Of human woe! Unwonted case! to reach
The heavenly goal uncovered with the scars
Of earthly battle! Christian combatant!
The conflict is unchanged. Who would the path
Of suffering avoid, his Saviour trod,
Or claim immunity from woe, when HE
Attained *His* crown with "garments rolled in blood"?

"WELLS OF BACA."

Lord, teach us to pray.

THERE are who mock at prayer, and with their blind
And tangled sophistries would shake our faith
In that which to our hearts the Father saith
When he commands to seek that we may find.
Ah! fools, and vain! whence shall the fainting mind
Seek strength but from the Strong—where find repose
But in that Friend who all its troubles knows,
And all its wounds can tenderly upbind?
All pious hearts *must* pray; they can not live
Save as they breathe an atmosphere of prayer.
Their life began with prayer: "O Lord! forgive,"
Was their soul's birth-wail, and, as on they fare,
Their cry is still for help; and still they say,
When nearest Christ: "Lord, teach us how to pray."

W. L. ALEXANDER.

The Death of a Husband.

BY

REV. GEORGE W. BETHUNE, D.D.

Words of Scripture.

GLORY IN TRIBULATION.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.—Romans 1 : 5.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.—2 Corinthians 12: 10.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Romans 8 : 35–39.

The Death of a Husband.

"She goeth unto the grave to weep there."

It is a sad thing to bury our dead out of our sight—to close up and to bear away to the grave, and leave behind us in its earthy chilliness, the dear form we have cherished so fondly, there to return again to dust, as though it had never been! And then how heavy on the heart is the stillness that succeeds the last scene in the house of mourning! We can not bring ourselves to believe that the loved and departed are indeed gone, and that for them our cares and nursings and watchings are over for ever. We tread lightly past the door of the chamber where the sufferer was but is not, as though yet our step might break the uneasy slumber, or jar the sore and weary frame. Our very senses cheat us with

sorrowful but not unwelcome delusions. We seem to hear the sighings, the faint murmurings, the groanings of that voice which is hushed until the morning of the resurrection. We listen for the step that was music to our welcoming hearts. We watch the opening door in a sickening hope that the lost will return again, and prove all to have been a dream; and when we kneel to pray, the accustomed petition for them, to pray for whom now is sin, rises to our lips, and chokes our utterance. Amidst such grief, the human heart in all ages and countries, has sought a melancholy comfort in paying a pious respect to the remains of mortality. These are the last offices that affection can render—the last proof of a fidelity that served them living, and yet yearns unavailingly to serve them dead.

Among the more ancient and Eastern nations, as indeed still among those whose feelings are more passionate if not more lasting than those of our colder Anglo-Saxon lineage, there was a beautiful sacredness in every thing touching death, burial, and the resting-places of the dead. To be deprived of funereal rites was a calamity of the last degree of bitterness, such as hate invoked against enemies, and love deprecated in behalf of friends. To violate the sanctuary of the tomb, was more

impious in the sight of Heaven, and more offensive to men, than to wrong the living. Neither pains nor expense was spared to render the obsequies imposing, and to adorn the sepulchre. It is true, the pride of family, of wealth, and power, often thus made a mockery of a sorrow that was little felt; yet it was to counterfeit the modes which had their origin in the best and truest feelings that sin has left in our fallen nature; feelings which Christianity does not rebuke but hallows; for to the believer, the three dearest spots on earth are the home of kindred hearts, the sanctuary of our spiritual enjoyments, and the place where our dead are sleeping.

But of all nations, none seem to have carried these last testimonies of respect farther than the Jews. Of this we have a remarkable instance at the burial of the first Cæsar. Suetonius tells us, that representatives of every people tributary to the Mistress of the World joined in the obsequies, and after their peculiar customs mourned for him, who, with all his faults, was as clement as he was ambitious; but of them all, the Jews were most remarkable for the expression and vehemence of their grief. Doubtless, their religion, which taught them intimations of the resurrection and immortality, contributed to increase their regard

for a dust that was sacred, and to awaken a hope that such signs of affection were not displeasing to the disembodied spirit.

The public burial-places of the Jews were always without the gates of the city; for the injurious custom of crowding the dead in towns and about religious edifices arose afterwards in the dark ages of a grasping and heathenish perversion of Christianity. The cemetery of each family was carefully set apart from the rest, adorned with mournful taste; and thither they often went, to strew fresh flowers and to weep for those who slept around. It was not, however, unusual for the richer families to build private sepulchres in the gardens or groves near their country dwellings. Such was the sepulchre of Lazarus, the brother of the weeper in our text. Such also, as you remember, was the sepulchre of Joseph of Arithmathea, built by him before death had entered his immediate family, and in which was laid the pure but exanimate body of our crucified Master. "There was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein man was never yet laid." Thus they did not banish from their minds the grave and the dead, but kept the expectation of death and the memories of the departed in their familiar thoughts.

It were salutary, and not unnatural, for us, like them, at least in spirit, to go often to the grave, to meditate and weep there.

We are made of dust, says the Scripture catechist, to teach us to be humble, and mindful of death; and many a profitable lesson may be learned by looking upon the graves that are ready for us, and those in which our kindred lie. The young, the gay, and the very worldly, may think there is nothing but horrid gloom in such thoughts; but I believe that I am not wrong in saying that few persons given to contemplation pass many years of life without finding death and the shroud become more and more the subject of their meditations. The ancient heathen philosophers, feeble as were their notions of an after life, are full of death in their writings; nay, says one of them—and others have the same sentiments—the study of death is the worthy business of life, and they best live who are learning how to die. The poets who are truest to nature, love to dwell upon its sad images; and one whose numbers were soft even to voluptuousness, closes a sweet picture of domestic happiness, by wishing that she whom he loved might be near him in his last sufferings, to catch the last pressure of his faithful but failing hand, and

to follow him to the grave with her tears. Much more should we, who have the light of hope gleaming upon us through the sepulchre from the bright world beyond, dwell upon the same event that happeneth to us all.

Yes! we must die! Yet a little while, the sun shall no more shine for us. Home and loving friends, and fond hopes, and ambitious imaginings, and gainful schemes, and flatteries of growing wisdom, and plans of usefulness, and promises of better living, must all be left behind. How should we hold our treasures of affection as but lent to us from God! How should we feel the emptiness of all that has no link to immortality and heaven! How should we strive to do whatever good work our hands find to do! The Master ever looked forward to his death; and the rule of his divine life—the gracious pattern given for our following—was to work the will of Him that sent him while it was day; knowing the night cometh when no man can work. Indeed, if we would live like the blessed St. Paul, we must "die daily." Our hope as Christians, the crown of our rejoicing, the inheritance we share in our Redeemer, our true life and place of living is beyond the tomb. Death must be swallowed up of life, before the victory can be ours.

Nor is the grave always sad in its associations. Life is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to look upon the sun. But life is not all sweetness. There are moments when the heart that has gone forth seeking those to love and trust and win by service and kind deeds to them, is driven back, weary, torn, and bleeding, to its bosom; when we miss those who were once faithful and true and full of sympathy and gentle patience, but who now are silent in the tomb—who can not hear us when we call them, to whose side we may not go, and whose kind comfortings we may not hear again; or when others that we leaned upon in our confidence, and opened our hearts to in their weakness and in their strength, as we would open them to God, have proved but as Egyptian reeds, piercing us the deeper from the very reliance we put upon them; when our good deeds are warped by cruel suspicion from their motives, and our faulty ones magnified and blazed abroad; when we see our labors fail of fruit, and a cloud darkens over our following days, and sin witnesses against us, and temptations press hard upon us, and our burden seems more than we can bear; then we look upon the peaceful grave and the quiet dead, and if God permitted, and it were not wrong to be impatient, we could wish

to lie down where the wicked cease from troubling. Thus thought the patient man of Uz; and who would live always if he have a hope beyond the grave? It is sweet to do the Master's work; nay, it is sweet to suffer his holy will, enjoying his sympathy; but there are moments when we can not choose but think that it would be a privilege if we might,

> "sustained and soothed
> By an unfaltering trust, approach our grave,
> Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

It is good for us to go to the grave, that we may weep and meditate over the dead.

There lie those whom we might have served but did not, whose good we might have secured by the divine blessing, who are now beyond the reach of kindness, faith, and prayers. Not unavailing will be our regrets, if they send us back to serve and bless the living, ere they, too, are gone; and if, as we look down upon the sleeping mould, we remember that we have ever wounded any there by unkindness and harsh thoughts and serpent-stinged words; or have judged mercilessly and fiercely the spirit that God, who will soon judge us, has since judged, how deep will be our relentings—for they can not now hear

our regrets or speak our forgiveness. Yet not unavailing shall those relentings be, if they teach us charity and meek judgment, such as sinners should use with sinners, to the living who are yet with us, but who must soon be as the dead. We are not forbidden to weep for the dead. God, who hath given us hearts to suffer, hath given us tears to relieve them, by giving vent to their swelling sorrows. He hath said not only, Blessed are they that mourn, but also, Blessed are they that weep; and graciously promised, that they who sow in tears shall reap in joy. It is true, these tears should be shed in pious trust and resignation; but still, tears are not forbidden. God counts and bottles up the tears of his people, shed in gentle submission but actual sorrow. He chastens us, that we may suffer, and tears are the outward signs of suffering. It is hardness of heart, a rebellious obstinacy that does not feel; and sad indeed is the case of those whose throbbing brain and constricted heart can not find relief in tears. The stubborn child winces not at the chastening rod, but with malignant eye refuses to confess his pain, lest it should seem to be repentance; but the penitent one turns to kiss the smiting hand, and to sob out his contrition on his

parent's bosom. It is the ordinance of God for his fallen children, that "joy must have sorrow, and sorrow joy." There were no tears in Eden before sin entered, because there was no sorrow there. There are no tears in heaven, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb hath wiped them from off all faces; but that tears and holiness are not forbidden to be together, the narrative of our text sweetly shows us.

The Jews had three terms of mourning for the dead. The first three days were called emphatically the days of weeping. Then followed four days of lamentation; and they filled up thirty days after the burial with various signs of mourning. During the days of weeping, and those more intimate during the days of lamentation, the friends of the family remained with them, sharing and comforting their grief. Lazarus had now been dead four days, yet we find many of the Jews about the house of the afflicted sisters. Jesus also, with his disciples, came from a distance to prove the sympathies of their friendship. When he drew near the house, he heard the voice of their mourning; he met Martha, and then Mary. He heard their passionate bursts of grief, and saw their tears. Yet he did not rebuke them. He looked upon

them, and Jesus wept. The Healer, the Comforter, the Holy One of Israel wept! Ah! beloved Master! thou hadst already learned to weep, when by the sea-shore and on the mountain thou didst offer thy prayers unto thy Father, with "strong crying and tears."

No, beloved mourner, weep! Gush forth the full luxury of your grief. For you the Master wept, that you might not weep in vain. But as you weep, grasp his feet as the weeping sisters did; wrestle with him as the weeping Jacob did, and from the hope of his promise turn your sadness into weeping joy.

The sorrowful remembrance of the dead hath most excellent uses.

I have heard of some who strive always to forget the friends they have lost; and we read in a poet's lines, that "Time, the adorner of the ruin," is "the bosom's comforter." Alas! the heart that craves comfort from forgetfulness, must be as hard and cold and cheerless as the stones of the ruin that time adorns with the ivy and the moss. Who that hath been happy or sad in affection would forget?

> "What are a thousand living loves
> To that which can not quit the dead?"

We may indeed cease to pour unavailing and passionate tears. The remaining duties of life call us from our sackcloth and ashes; but though the rain may fall less plentifully, the dews of sad remembrance still keep the heart, as affliction made it, soft and tender, and, by divine grace, fruitful. How precious to the Christian are the prayers which the pious dead offered for us in the days of their flesh; the dying words of counsel or of thanks we caught from their expiring lips!

The dead remind us of our kindred to the dust, and the pious dead link us, if we have the like faith with them, to heaven. Each friend we lose takes a portion from our life — the heart goes piece-meal to the tomb long before it breaks with the last agony. "I shall go to him," said the singer of Israel, over the grave of his child; "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Thus should we use the memories of those who die in hope, to draw us onward in the narrow way, and to uplift with our love to them our whole affections to the things that are not seen and eternal.

Yet that our sorrow may be blessed, let us go to Jesus with it. The Jews thought Mary was going to weep at the sepulchre, and so she did;

but she had heard that the Master had come, and she went first to him, and he went with her to the grave. He went with her first to weep and then to turn her mourning into joy with life from the dead. Ah! my friend, whatever we mean to do, let us go first to Jesus. If we mean to be glad, and go not first to him, our joy shall be turned into sorrow; if we mean to weep, and go not to him, our sorrow shall never be turned into joy. When blessing comes or trial comes, it brings to us the message that Martha bore to Mary, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," and we should, like Mary, "rise up hastily" and go forth to meet him. And, blessed Saviour, when did ever mourner seek thee, and not find thee, or find thee and not find comfort?

But if we take Jesus with us to the grave of the pious dead, we mourn not without hope, for He that then stands with us beside the grave is the Resurrection and the Life—He that liveth and was dead and is alive again. We have no reason to hope that he will bid us take away the monumental stone, and call the dead themselves back to us in life. But he will give us the better consolation of knowing that the dust rests in hope, and that the spirit is happy with him in sinless, glorious, sorrowless delight. Is not

that a better consolation? Who would be so selfish as to wish that the happy dead were back with us among the bitter sorrows and the more painful sins of this sad life? The pilgrim has reached his home; shall we call him back to toil with us through the sands and pine beneath the scorching heat of the desert? The warrior has won the victory, and God has put the amaranthine crown upon his head, and the unfading palm in his hand; would we have him cast them aside and mingle again in the dust of the conflict to feel its wounds? The exiled sinner has been received back again to his Father's house, and they are making "heaven ring with jubilee, and loud hosannas fill the eternal regions;" would we call him to us in this far country to share our mortal raggedness and the husks of this life? No, blessed dead, may your dust sleep on in a peace God's holy angels are watching over. We shall see that dust reänimated. Jesus, the life, shall raise up your mortal immortality, your corruption incorruption. . Again shall we look upon your beloved face, but no longer pale with sickness and worn with weeping. You shall be glorious as the Master himself is glorified, in holy, perpetual, tearless youth. Again shall we hear your loved voice, not in sighs and groan-

ings, and struggling prayers, but hymning with ten thousand times ten thousand thousand, hallelujahs far above the pitch of cherubim and seraphim. If it be the Master's will that we must still struggle on in tears, and persecutions, and temptations, and conflicts, to bear the winter's rage and summer's heat, we are glad that you have gone home and taken your wages. Peace be to your dust! and until

> "The illustrious morning break,
> When all the saints shall rise,"

sing on with your spiritual voice the song of heaven, swelling high the praise of Him whom you loved on earth as you cast your crown at the feet that were nailed upon the cross. God keep us to join you; and oh! if it be his holy will, may it be soon, for some of us are weary, weary, and have great need of patience until we get the promises.

Mary wept for her brother, and she had the sympathy of Him whom it is our blessed privilege to claim as our Elder Brother; but the pious widow weeping over the grave of him who was the bosom companion of her life, until it pleased God to receive his spirit sanctified through Christ, may appeal to the Mediator's heart by a yet

dearer name; for when the Lord would show how tenderly and faithfully he "nourisheth and cherisheth his Church," (Eph. 5 : 29,) he calls himself her husband, her precious, holy, affectionate "husband." So, heart-stricken mourner, he knows the grief and anguish you feel; he knows the desolateness of your spirit and its yearning after a solace the world can not give. Go to the grave of your beloved one; but as you go let not your tears so blind you, neither so hang down your head that you may not see that Jesus has come to meet and sustain you. Hear his gracious voice from beside the tomb: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Believest thou this? Your husband is not dead. His believing soul that lived with Christ here, now lives with Christ in heaven; and his Christian dust is sleeping sweetly until he shall rise, immortal, glorious, and incorruptible at the resurrection of the last day. All your love, and watching, and anxious nursing could not save him from suffering and sickness and the tomb; but the love of Jesus has delivered him from all, and taken him up to that sinless, sorrowless home where there "shall be no

more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things shall have passed away." Here you were united in a better than an earthly love, the love of Christ, and in that love you are and shall be united for ever. Look, then, beyond the scene of your mortal grief, to the home of your perpetual bliss. Christ has lain in the tomb and sweetened it for the sleep of his beloved and yours; but as you stoop to see within the sepulchre see you not that it is broken, and that the uprising Master has opened a way through it, up through the rent veil, up through the everlasting doors, to the paradise of God? There seek to follow; and when you draw near the celestial threshold, you will find waiting to welcome you one more radiant than an angel, in whose transfigured countenance you will recognize him you have not lost, but who has gone before to our Father's house.

Poems.

O THOU of dark forebodings drear!
O thou of such a faithless heart!
Hast thou forgotten what thou art,
That thou hast ventured so to fear?

No weed on ocean's bosom cast,
Borne by its never-resting foam
This way and that, without a home
Till flung on some bleak shore at last;

But thou the lotus, which above
Swayed here and there by wind and tide,
Yet still below doth fixed abide,
Fast rooted in the Eternal Love. TRENCH.

Poems on the Death of a Husband.

The Dead Husband.

There was an eye, whose partial glance
Could ne'er my numerous failings see;
There was an ear that heard untired
When others spoke in praise of me.

There was a heart time only taught
With warmer love for me to burn;
A heart whene'er from home I roved
Which fondly pined for my return.

There was a lip which always breathed
E'en short farewells in tones of sadness;
There was a voice whose eager sound
My welcome spoke with heartfelt gladness.

There was a mind whose vigorous power
On mine its own effulgence threw,
And called my humble talents forth,
While thence its dearest joys it drew.

There was a love, which for my weal
With anxious fears would overflow;
Which wept, which prayed for me, and sought
From future ills to guard—but now—

That eye is closed, and deaf that ear,
That lip and voice are mute for ever;
And cold that heart of anxious love,
Which death alone from mine could sever:

And lost to me that ardent mind,
Which loved my various tasks to see;
And oh! of all the praise I gained
His was the dearest far to me!

Now I, unloved, uncheered, *alone*,
Life's dreary wilderness must tread,
Till He who heals the broken heart
In mercy bids me join the dead.

O Thou! who from thy throne on high,
Canst heed the mourner's deep distress—
O Thou! who hear'st the widow's cry—
Thou, Father of the fatherless!

Though now I am a faded leaf,
That's severed from its parent tree,
And thrown upon a stormy tide,
Life's awful tide that leads to Thee,

Still, gracious Lord! the voice of praise
Shall spring spontaneous from my breast;
Since though I tread a weary way
I trust that he I mourn is blest.

MRS. OPIE.

The Future Glory.

WOULDST thou inherit life with Christ on high?
Then count the cost, and know
That here on earth below
Thou needst must suffer with thy Lord, and die.
We reach that gain to which all else is loss,
But through the Cross.

Oh! think what sorrows Christ himself has known!
The scorn, and anguish sore,
The bitter death he bore,
Ere he ascended to his heavenly throne;
And deemest thou, thou canst with right complain,
Whate'er thy pain?

Not e'en the sharpest sorrows we can feel,
Nor keenest pangs, we dare
With that great bliss compare
When God his glory shall in us reveal,
That shall endure when our brief days are o'er
For evermore!

LYRA GERMANICA.

The Voice of the Departed.

"I SHINE in the light of God,
His likeness stamps my brow;
Through the valley of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now.
No breaking heart is here;
No keen and thrilling pain;
No wasted cheek, where the frequent tear
Hath rolled and left its stain.

"I have found the joy of heaven;
I am one of the angel-band;
To my head a crown is given,
And a harp is in my hand.
I have learned the song they sing,
Whom Jesus hath made free;
And the glorious walls on high still ring
With my new-born melody.

"No sin, no grief, no pain;
Safe in my happy home;
My fears all fled—my doubts all slain;
My hour of triumph come.
Friend of my mortal years!
The trusted and the tried!
Thou art walking still in the valley of tears,
But I am at thy side.

"Do I forget? Oh! no!
For memory's golden chain
Shall bind my heart to the heart below
Till they meet and touch again.
Each link is strong and bright,
And love's electric flame
Flows freely down, like a river of light,
To the world from which I came.

"Do you mourn when another star
Shines out from the glittering sky?
Do you weep when the noise of war
And the rage of conflict die?
Then why should your tears roll down,
And your heart with grief be riven,
For another gem in the Saviour's crown,
And another soul in heaven?"

M. G. J.

The Widow.

There is a mourner, and her heart is broken;
She is a widow; she is old and poor;
Her only hope is in that sacred token
Of peaceful happiness when life is o'er.
She asks nor wealth nor pleasure; begs no more
Than Heaven's delightful volume, and the sight
Of her Redeemer. Skeptics, would you pour
Your blasting vials on her head, and blight
Sharon's sweet rose, that blooms and charms her being's night?

She lives in her affections; for the grave
Has closed upon her husband, children; all
Her hopes are with the arm she trusts will save
Her treasured jewels. Though her views are small,
Though she has never mounted high to fall
And writhe in her debasement, yet the spring
Of her meek, tender feelings can not pall
Her unperverted palate, but will bring
A joy without regret, a bliss that has no sting.

Even as a fountain whose unsullied wave
Wells in the pathless valley, flowing o'er
With silent waters, kissing as they lave
The pebbles with light rippling, and the shore
Of matted grass and flowers—so softly pour
The breathings of her bosom when she prays
Low-bowed before her Maker; then no more
She muses on the griefs of former days—
Her full heart melts, and flows in Heaven's dissolving rays.

And faith can see a new world; and the eyes
Of saints look pity on her. Death will come:
A few short moments over and the prize
Of peace eternal waits her, and the tomb
Becomes her fondest pillow: all its gloom
Is scattered. What a meeting there will be
To her and all she loved here! and the bloom
Of new life from those cheeks shall never flee:
Theirs is the health which lasts through all eternity.

PERCIVAL.

— And said unto her, "Weep not!"

Leave all to God,
Forsaken one, and still thy tears.
For the Highest knows thy pain,
Sees thy sufferings and thy fears;
Thou shalt not wait his help in vain—
Leave all to God.

Be still and trust!
For His strokes are strokes of love,
Thou must for thy profit bear;
He thy filial fear would move;
Trust thy Father's loving care,
Be still and trust!

Know God is near!
Though thou think him far away,
Though his mercy long have slept,
He will come and not delay,
When his child enough hath wept,
For God is near!

Oh! teach Him not
When and how to hear thy prayers;
Never doth our God forget.
He the cross who longest bears
Finds his sorrow's bounds are set:
Then teach Him not!

If thou love Him,
Walking truly in his ways,
Then no trouble, cross, or death,
Shakes thy heart, or quells thy praise.
All things serve thee here beneath
If thou love God.!

LYRA GERMANICA.

All are not Taken.

ALL are not taken! there are left behind
Living belovéds, tender looks to bring,
And make the daylight still a blessed thing,
And tender voices, to make soft the wind.
But if it were not so—if I could find
No love in all the world to answer me,
Nor any pathway but rang hollowly,
Where "dust to dust," the love from life disjoined—
And if with parched lips, as in a dearth
Of water-springs the very deserts claim,
I uttered to those sepulchres unmoving
The bitter cry, "Where are ye, O my loving!"
I know a voice would sound, "Daughter, I AM!
Can I suffice for heaven, and not for earth?"

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

He Careth for You.

What within me and without,
Hourly on my spirit weighs,
Burdening heart and soul with doubt,
Darkening all my weary days:
In it I behold Thy will,
God, who givest rest and peace,
And my heart is calm and still,
Waiting till thou send release.

God; thou art my rock and strength,
And my home is in thine arms,
Thou wilt send me help at length,
And I feel no wild alarms.
Sin nor Death can pierce the shield
Thy defense has o'er me thrown,
Up to thee myself I yield,
And my sorrows are thine own.

When my trials tarry long,
Unto thee I look and wait,
Knowing none, though keen and strong,
Can my trust in thee abate.
And this faith I long have nursed,
Comes alone, O God! from thee,
Thou my heart didst open first,
Thou didst set this hope in me.

Christians! cast on Him your load—
To your tower of refuge fly;
Know he is the Living God,
Ever to his creature nigh.
See his ever-open door
In your hours of utmost need;
All your hearts before him pour,
He will send you help with speed.

But hast thou some darling plan,
Cleaving to the things of earth?
Leanest thou for aid on man?
Thou wilt find him nothing worth.
Rather trust the One alone
Whose is endless power and love,
And the help he gives his own,
Thou in very deed shalt prove.

On thee, O my God! I rest,
Letting life float calmly on;
For I know the last is best,
When the crown of joy is won.
In thy might all things I bear,
In thy love find bitters sweet,
And with all my grief and care,
Sit in patience at thy feet,

O my soul! why art thou vexed?
Let things go e'en as they will;
Though to thee they seem perplexed,
Yet His order they fulfill.

Here he is thy strength and guard;
Power to harm thee here has none;
Yonder will He each reward
For the works he here has done,

Let Thy mercy's wings be spread
O'er me, keep me close to thee;
In the peace thy love doth shed,
Let me dwell eternally.
Be my ALL; in all I do
Let me only seek thy will;
Where the heart to thee is true,
All is peaceful, calm, and still.

LYRA GERMANICA.

Patient Waiting.

OH! let my trembling soul be still,
While darkness veils this mortal eye,
And wait Thy wise, thy holy will,
Wrapped yet in fears and mystery;
I can not, Lord thy purpose see;
Yet all is well, since ruled by thee.

When mounted on thy clouded car,
Thou send'st thy darker spirits down,
I can discern thy light afar—
Thy light, sweet beaming through thy frown;
And should I faint a moment, then
I think of thee, and smile again.

So, trusting in thy love, I tread
The narrow path of duty on;
What though some cherished joys are fled?
What though some flattering dreams are gone?
Yet purer, brighter joys remain;
Why should my spirit, then, complain?

The Sleep.

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
Along the Palmist's music deep—
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this—
"He giveth his belovéd sleep"?

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart, to be unmoved—
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep—
The senate's shout for patriot vows—
The monarch's crown to light the brows?
"He giveth his beloved sleep."

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith not all unproved—
A little dust, to over weep—

And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake?
"He giveth his beloved sleep."

Sleep soft, beloved! we sometimes say;
But have no power to charm away
Sad dreams that though the eyelids creep;
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber, when
"He giveth his beloved sleep."
O earth! so full of dreary noises!
O men! with wailing in your voices!
O delvéd gold, the wailers' heap!
O strife! O curse! that o'er it fall!
God makes a silence through you all,
And "giveth his beloved sleep."

His dews drop mutely on the hill;
His cloud above it, saileth still,
Though on its slope men toil and reap!
More softly than the dew is shed
A cloud is floated over-head:
"He giveth his beloved sleep."

Yea! men may wonder, while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man
Sufficient such a rest to keep;
But angels say—and through the word
The motion of their smile is heard,
"He giveth his beloved sleep."

For me, my heart—that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
  Seeing through tears the juggler leap—
Would fain its wearied vision close,
And child-like on His love repose,
  Who "giveth his beloved sleep."

And friends! dear friends! when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me—
  When round my bier ye come to weep;
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall—
  "He giveth his beloved sleep."

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

"It is the Lord."

It is the Lord—enthroned in light,
  Whose claims are all divine;
Who has an undisputed right,
  To govern me and mine.

It is the Lord—who governs all—
  My wealth, my friends, my ease,
And of his bounties may recall
  Whatever part he please.

It is the Lord—should I distrust,
Or contradict his will
Who can not do but what is just,
And must be righteous still?

It is the Lord—who can sustain
Beneath the heaviest load,
From whom assistance I obtain,
To tread the thorny road.

It is the Lord—whose matchless skill
Can from afflictions raise—
Matter, eternity to fill
With ever growing praise.

It is the Lord—my covenant God,
Thrice blessed be his name!
Whose gracious promise, sealed with blood,
Must ever be the same.

His covenant will my soul defend,
Should nature's self expire;
And the great Judge of all descend
In awful, flaming fire.

GREEN.

Looking to Jesus.

When along life's thorny road,
Faints the soul beneath the load,
By its cares and sins oppressed,
Finds on earth no peace or rest;
When the wily tempter's near,
Filling me with doubts and fear,
Jesus, to thy feet I flee,
Jesus, I will look to thee.

Thou, my Saviour, from the throne,
List'nest to thy people's moan;
Thou, the living head, dost share
Every pang thy members bear.
Full of tenderness thou art;
Thou wilt heal the broken heart;
Full of power, thine arm shall quell
All the rage and might of hell!

By thy tears o'er Lazarus shed,
By thy power to raise the dead,
By thy meekness under scorn,
By thy stripes and crown of thorn,
By that rich and precious blood,
That hath made our peace with God;
Jesus, to thy feet I flee;
Jesus, I will cling to thee.

Mighty to redeem and save,
Thou hast overcome the grave;
Thou the bars of death hast riven,
Opened wide the gates of heaven;
Soon in glory thou shalt come,
Taking thy poor pilgrims home;
Jesus, then we all shall be,
Ever—ever—Lord, with Thee.

Give me thine Heart.

Here is my heart!—my God, I give it thee;
I heard thee call and say,
"Not to the world, my child, but unto me"—
I heard and will obey.
Here is love's offering to my King,
Which a glad sacrifice I bring—
Here is my heart.

Here is my heart!—surely the gift, though poor,
My God will not despise;
Vainly and long I sought to make it pure,
To meet thy searching eyes;
Corrupted first in Adam's fall,
The stains of sin pollute it all—
My guilty heart!

Here is my heart!—my heart so hard before,
Now by thy grace made meet;
Yet bruised and wearied, it can only pour
Its anguish at thy feet:
It groans beneath the weight of sin,
It sighs salvation's joy to win—
My mourning heart!

Here is my heart!—in Christ its longings end,
Near to his cross it draws;
It says, "Thou art my portion, O my Friend!
Thy blood my ransom was."
And in the Saviour it has found
What blessedness and peace abound—
My trusting heart!

Here is my heart! ah! Holy Spirit, come,
Its nature to renew,
And consecrate it wholly as thy home,
A temple fair and true.
Teach it to love and serve thee more,
To fear thee, trust thee, and adore—
My cleaned heart!

Here is my heart!—it trembles to draw near
The glory of thy throne:
Give it the shining robe thy servants wear,
Of righteousness thine own:
Its pride and folly chase away,
And all its vanity, I pray—
My humbled heart!

Here is my heart!—teach it, O Lord! to cling
In gladness unto thee;
And in the day of sorrow still to sing,
"Welcome my God's decree."
Believing, all its journey through,
That thou art wise, and just, and true—
My waiting heart!

Here is my heart!—O Friend of friends! be near,
To make each tempter fly,
And when my latest foe I wait with fear,
Give me the victory!
Gladly on Thy love reposing,
Let me say, when life is closing,
Here is my heart!

EHRENFRIED LIEDICK.

Broken-Hearted, weep no more!

BROKEN-HEARTED, weep no more!
Hear what comfort He hath spoken,
Smoking flax who ne'er hath quenched,
Bruised reed who ne'er hath broken:
"Ye who wander here below,
Heavy laden as ye go,
Come, with grief, with sin oppressed,
Come to me, and be at rest!"

Lamb of Jesus' blood-bought flock,
Brought again from sin and straying,
Hear the Shepherd's gentle voice—
'Tis a true and tender saying:
"Greater love how can there be
Than to yield up life for thee?
Bought with pang, and tear, and sigh;
Turn and live!—why will ye die?"

Broken-hearted, weep no more!
Far from consolation flying;
He who calls hath felt thy wound,
Seen thy weeping, heard thy sighing:
"Bring thy broken heart to me;
Welcome offering it shall be;
Streaming tears and bursting sighs
Mine accepted sacrifice."

ANONYMOUS.

The Angel of Patience.

To WEARY hearts, to mourning homes,
God's meekest Angel gently comes;
No power has he to banish pain,
Or give us back our lost again;
And yet, in tenderest love, our dear
And Heavenly Father sends him here.

There's quiet in that Angel's glance,
There's rest in his still countenance;
He mocks no grief with idle cheer,
Nor wounds with words the mourner's ear;
But ills and woes he may not cure,
He kindly learns us to endure.

Angel of Patience! sent to calm
Our feverish brow with cooling balm;
To lay the storms of hope and fear,
And reconcile life's smile and tear;
And throbs of wounded pride to still,
And make our own our Father's will!

O thou, who mournest on thy way!
With longings for the close of day,
He walks with thee, that Angel kind,
And gently whispers: "Be resigned!
Bear up, bear on, the end shall tell
The dear Lord ordereth all things well!"

"Thy Will be done."

To do, or not to do—to have,
  Or not to have—I leave to Thee;
To be, or not to be, I leave—
  Thy only will be done to me.
All my requests are lost in one—
Father, thy only will be done!

Suffice, that, for the season past
  Myself in things divine I sought,
For comforts cried with eager haste,
  And murmured when I found them not;
I leave it now to thee alone—
Father, thy only will be done!

Thy gifts I clamor for no more,
  Or selfishly thy grace require
An evil heart to varnish o'er;
  Jesus, the Giver, I desire,
After the flesh no longer known;
Father, thy only will be done!

Welcome alike the crown or cross,
  Trouble I can not ask; nor peace,
Nor toil, nor rest, nor gain, nor loss,
  Nor joy, nor grief, nor pain, nor ease,
Nor life, nor death; but ever pray,
Father, thy only will be done!

Speak to me, O my Saviour!

Speak to me, O my Saviour! low and sweet,
  From out the hallelujahs—sweet and low,
  Lest I should fear and fall, and miss thee so,
Who art not missed where faithful hearts entreat.

Speak to me, as to Mary at thy feet;
And if no precious gums my hands bestow,
My tears fall fast, as amber. Let me go
In reach of thy divinest voice complete.
With humanest affection, there, in sooth,
To lose the sense of losing! as a child,
Its song-bird being lost, fled evermore,
Is sung to in its stead by mother's mouth;
Till sinking on her breast, love-reconciled,
He sleeps the faster that he wept before.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

He rests from his Labors.

WHAT means, my soul, this inward fretful strife
Betwixt this world and that which is to come?
Why on the brink of thine eternal home
Thus cling'st thou, struggling, to the thread of life?
What's life to thee? Hath it not proved a dream—
A fitful, feverish, ever-changing state,
Where love and hope are dashed with fear and hate,
And joy is but a bubble on the stream?
And what is death? A deep and dreamless sleep,
Sweet to the wearied frame; the harbinger
Of that bright dawn when, far from strife and stir,
The saints shall their eternal Sabbath keep.
Bethink thee, then, worn pilgrim, which is best:
The toilsome journey or the quiet rest?

W. L. ALEXANDER.

The Death of a Parent.

BY

REV. J. B. WATERBURY, D.D.

Words of Scripture.

He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.
1 John 2 : 6.

Wherefore let us run with patience the race that is set before us: looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.—Hebrews 12 : 1, 2, 3.

Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.—1 Peter 2 : 21, 22, 23.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.—Isaiah 53 : 7.

Though He were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.—Hebrews 5 : 8, 9.

For it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.—Hebrews 2 : 10.

For in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.—Hebrews 2 : 18.

The Death of a Parent.

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

It is the expectation that children will survive their parents. The reverse seems to do more violence to nature; and is an exception to a law of vitality, which necessitates death in the latter case. Yet who can contemplate without pain an event which separates us from those venerated forms whose looks of love were the first conscious images pictured on our infant souls; and whose care over us, and interest in us, were neither extinguished nor lessened by our ingratitude or our follies.

In childhood, we scarcely realize our indebtedness to parental kindness and care. It seems as if the provision made for our wants, and the self-denial practised for our benefit, were a mat-

ter of course; and when the parent wonders at our unreasonable murmurings, or drops a tear over our disobedience and ingratitude, we stare, as if unconscious of what it all can mean. Selfishness is apt to rule in the young heart, and under its influence we are prone to indulge expectations which are unreasonable, and to exhibit an ingratitude that is monstrous. But as time rolls on, and experience takes the place of youthful impulse and emotion, we begin to discern more clearly our obligations to parental love, and appreciate more correctly the care and self-denial which had been practised for our good. It takes but a few years to bring the child and the parent into close sympathy, and thus, whilst filial affection is not lessened, there is combined with it the additional element of respect. We mix not long with society ere we learn the hollowness of its professions, the fickleness of its attachments, and the selfishness of its aims. Our sanguine expectations are disappointed, and we revert to home scenes and domestic affections, as furnishing a more reliable basis of hope and of confidence. Especially are we convinced that there is in the whole world of affection nothing so enduring, so reliable as the love that beats in the parent's heart.

How then can we look forward to their demise without feeling that in depriving us of their presence and their care, death is inflicting on us a most grievous visitation?

The child of true affection will watch with no ordinary emotions, the signs of increasing decrepitude; will sigh in his secret bosom to discover the traces of age in the hoary locks and the wrinkled brow; and looking upon these admonitory tokens, will lift the silent prayer, that God would long spare him the trial, which eventually he knows he must encounter.

When the time actually arrives in which the silver cord—now attenuated to a thread—must be loosed, and the aged form must pass away, oh! how will memory array in one complex group the images of tenderness and affection which had been accumulating from infancy through a long succession of years! Then will be realized and felt the obligations which in childhood could not be appreciated; and the sorrow will be deepened by the consideration that the loss is irreparable. It is said of one of the kings of England, that, on losing an only son and heir almost simultaneously with the death of his father, he mourned much more grievously over the latter than the former. Surprised at this, his courtiers said to

him: "Sire, you seem more inconsolable at the loss of your aged father than of your only son and heir." "True," replied the King; "and for good reasons. God can give me another son; but he can not give me another *father*."

But the father and the mother, in the ordinary course of nature, must forsake us. The words "forsake us," according to Bishop Horne, and other commentators, are not intended to mark any thing like a criminal desertion, but may, and probably were intended to, refer to their departure at death. The parental care and watchfulness are then withdrawn, and the orphan children must look elsewhere for counsel, for sympathy and for help.

Where shall they look? Perhaps they have kind relatives who will be guardians to them; and happy will these orphans be if such put themselves in the place of a parent. But others will have no such human succor; and what will *they* do? There is one thing they *can* do—they can cast themselves on His care who "careth for them." In the absence of all human help, they may still say, using the language just quoted: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

Great and Precious Promises.

From the numerous promises which respect a state of orphanage, I am led to conclude, that God, as a pitiful Father, has a very special regard to the wants and necessities of such as are thus bereaved. Express provision was made for the fatherless under the Levitical economy. "Ye shall not afflict any fatherless child." In Deuteronomy 10 : 18 : "He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless." In Ps. 10 : 14 : "Thou art the helper of the fatherless." Jeremiah 49 : 11 : "Leave thy fatherless children ; I will preserve them alive." Hosea 14 : 3 : "For in thee the fatherless find mercy." It is made also a distinctive mark of true religion, under the New-Testament dispensation, that we "visit the widow and the *fatherless*."

In these promises, we recognize a deep sympathy on the part of God with those inexperienced and dependent children whom his providence has brought into a condition of orphanage. It is evident that whensoever the earthly parent, by death, shall forsake them, God, the great parent of all, may take them up. Turning then from the grave in which the tears of filial affection are

dropped, and whilst the heart sinks under a sense of its desolateness, the bereaved ones can look up and say, "Thou art a Father of the fatherless." This guardian care of Heaven, expressed in so many passages, and confirmed by the usual course of providence, has had a very marked effect in creating a public sentiment in behalf of orphans, which is a sort of a general guarantee that they will some how be cared for. Benevolent hearts are all alive to their condition, and where relatives prove indifferent—as, alas! in some instances, is the case—God will raise up those whose kindness and attentions shall more than compensate for the neglect. But, after all, the great point to be kept in view is, that these bereaved ones should put their trust in God, making him, by a voluntary recognition, their Father and their Friend.

The words, "The Lord will take me up," seem to imply that God will do for the orphan what, from instinctive affection, or from a sense of duty, the parents usually are accustomed to do. If this be so, a very interesting train of thought will be suggested, encouraging hope and imparting strong consolation.

"The Lord will take me up," is the language of *confidence*. It argues a degree of trust in the

young heart which can hardly be attributed to one who has no sense of religion. I imagine it to be the utterance of a youth who has enjoyed the smiles not only of an earthly father, but who has experienced also the light of God's reconciled countenance. He has the spirit of adoption, and can without presumption say, "Abba, Father."

What shall we do? What will now become of us? Who will now befriend us, or take an interest in us? are questions which a family of bereaved ones would naturally propose, as they surveyed the desolate hearth and household! They have lived long enough possibly to discover that human professions, even when sincere, are apt to be superficial—that tears which mingle with their own are but a momentary gush of sympathy, and that, in the rough encounters of this life, they will have to rely for help more on *themselves* than on their *friends;* and more on *God* than on *man.* All this is not only true, but it is well perhaps that it is so. The very necessity for self-reliance, combined with trust in God, is one means of eliciting energies which otherwise might have lain dormant; and of imparting a force of character which might not have been developed under less trying circumstances. How many of the noblest characters which have adorn-

ed the annals of the world, have been shaped and matured under the pressure of an early orphanage!

The Orphan's Trust.

I would say to the orphan, Have confidence in *God*. The night which has gathered around your early path and obscured so sadly the first part of your earthly journey, is not *all* darkness. God will be to you a sun; and you may hope that this darkness will give place to a serene and cloudless day. Put your trust in Him who has said, I will be a "Father of the fatherless."

The condition of orphanage, which I am considering, is that wherein the children are young and dependent; and where in place of the parental oversight and care, must be interposed necessarily the agency of friends and guardians. Other circumstances might be imagined, and not unfrequently occur, where the death of parents leaves no such solicitude, and orphanage has no such shadows thrown upon it. This is the case where the parents have lived to a good old age, have seen their children settled in life, and are ready with Simeon to say: "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!" I do not say there is not grief in this case; nor that, at any

period or under any circumstances, the death of parents is not a heavy and heart-rending blow; but that the pang is less severe, and the event less calamitous, than when a whole family of dependent children are made orphans. Yes; the loved form of parents in old age, we would gladly retain, and endeavor to pay back even to second childhood, the debt which our own juvenile experience has incurred. And when the moment arrives that the pilgrim-staff must be broken, and the dim eye closed in death, we would esteem it a sad but grateful privilege to render every possible alleviation under an event mournful at all times, but in old age inevitable. Far different is the scene where a dependent group of children surround the dying bed, and by their helplessness, give intensity to the pang of death! It is no easy thing, under such circumstances, for even a Christian parent to say, "Thy will be done." I know of one such scene where the father's faith was put to a severe test, as he saw his wife and six little children about to be cast upon the world, bereft of his care and support. The trying point with him was, that he must leave these orphans and this widow in such a world as this! He thought, however, of God's covenant and God's gracious promises. These he studied until

his faith rose to the needful point, and then calling them to his bed-side, he deliberately took leave of each of them, and commending them to God's protection, he said calmly: "Now, I am ready to go. I feel assured that God will take care of my wife and little ones." From that moment all was peace until he closed his eyes in death. The events proved that his faith was well-founded. The group was cared for. The Lord took them up: all of them attained to respectability, and some of them to great influence and usefulness in the Church and in the world.

I knew another instance where the father having died, left his widow with thirteen children, most of them very young; and soon the mother died also. What a group of orphans! But that mother was a true saint, and she had given these children to God; and when father and mother forsook them, the Lord took them up. They are now men and women; most of them with flourishing families, and all of them respectable, whilst quite a number of them are consistent and active members of the Church of God. Is there not good ground to trust in God when the earthly parent is separated from us by death?

If God will be to orphans in the place of the departed parent, if he will take them up where

the parent left them, and be their father and their friend, what more or what better could they desire? It implies that he will care for their *temporal* wants. The parent, by the force of instinctive love, labors for the good of his children in all respects. Their welfare and happiness make not only a part of his very life, but furnish powerful motives to labor for their support. In this respect, "parents lay up for their children, rather than children for their parents." But when death separates them from their offspring, how are they to get food and clothing? "He that heareth the cry of the ravens" will attend to theirs. A providence that looks after the sparrows, and clothes the grass of the field, will not usually, if ever suffer, "the seed of the righteous to beg their bread."

Again, God will care for their *spiritual* wants. And here the Heavenly Father may do for orphans much better than the earthly father shall have done. It is not *always* that a parent's anxiety is expended on the *highest* good of his children. Many think if their children are fed and clothed and educated in mere human learning the parental obligation is fully discharged. Not having themselves any deep sense of religious obligation, they take no pains to im-

plant it in the minds of their children, and when these parents die, this anxiety in the departing hour respects chiefly the dependent state of their children in regard to what is seen and temporal. But God may have something better in reserve for them. He may overrule this very orphanage, and make what is considered one of the greatest of earthly calamities, a means of everlasting good to the soul. The indulgence and the worldly training which might have issued in the ruin of its eternal state, may be counteracted by an affliction which makes personal effort obligatory, and personal self-denial a matter of necessity. The orphan may get into an atmosphere of healthful moral influences, so that by losing his earthly father, he may actually gain a place in the love of his heavenly Father.

Very different, however, are the feelings of *pious* parents who are called to leave their little ones behind them in a world like this. Their principal anxiety is not as to whether bread will be given to them, but it respects their exposedness to temptation, their spiritual necessities, and the possibility that they may, even amid great worldly prosperity, lose their immortal souls. Who will look after these precious interests? is the inquiry of the dying parent. We answer, "God

will take them up." We might put the question to this anxious dying parent, and say: What would you do for these children if you were to live and train them? You would, of course, teach them what is right and forbid them what is wrong. You would inculcate God's law, and hold up continually the duties which the Gospel enjoins. Your watchful eye would be upon them, and your beating, anxious heart would be lifted up to Heaven continually in their behalf. All this you would do and feel; but still, unless God blessed your efforts and answered your prayers, those efforts and those prayers would be in vain. Now, God, in separating you from them by death, and suspending a direct parental influence, seems to say—actually *does* say—by this very providence, "Leave thy fatherless children to me." "I will now take them up." "Their spiritual interests, no less than their temporal well-being, you may trust to my hands. Having been *your* covenant God and father, why can you not trust me to be also *theirs?* for the promise is to your children as well as to you." If we compare the spiritual conditions of orphans with that of those whose parents still live, we shall find, I apprehend, quite as many instances of hopeful conversion in the one case as in the other. The

orphan, from the very nature of the circumstances, is led to feel his dependence on an all-controlling providence. The eye of the earthly parent being closed in death, there comes the thought of God's presence and God's guardian care, prompting the prayer, "My Father, be thou the guide of my youth."

Being Dead they yet speak.

There is, moreover, the influence which death imparts to parental counsels and parental example, over and above what is felt while the parent is present. Who does not know, and what orphan has not realized the fact, that memory and conscience suggest a thousand things over the grave of the venerated one, which occurred not, or which made but little impression, whilst that parent was living?

There is a tenderness of feeling closely allied to moral exercises and religious emotions, which stirs in the soul and moistens in the eye, whilst we think of the love that blessed us, the patience that bore with us, and the wisdom that instructed us. Not only do the looks of remembered affection visit our sleeping and waking thoughts, and paint themselves on the memory and imagination;

but the counsels and warnings which once fell almost upon heedless ears, now recur with vividness; whispering as with angel voice, in the conscience, and leaving there a sense of obligation, which it were filial impiety to disregard. May not God make use of such feelings in leading the soul to those religious considerations, and to that conviction of sin, so necessary a preliminary to the acceptance of salvation? I have no doubt that He often does; and if the parent is permitted to see such a result growing out of the very calamity which seemed so distressful; if in that world of spirits, he is made acquainted with it—as there can be little reason to doubt he is—how will he extol, in his praises, the grace of God; and feel more fully than he ever felt on earth, that "behind a frowning providence, God may hide a smiling face."

Who will protect the orphans? Is *that* the anxiety of him who leaves them, and of them who are left? The answer again is: The same who has promised to *provide* for them. The parent, if *living*, can not ward off calamity from his dear ones. Sickness invades the loved circle; and death makes breach after breach, which no love nor care nor watchfulness can foresee and prevent. The drowned or mangled body is

brought and laid at the feet of the horror-stricken parents; and even *moral* dangers, worse than exposures to death; dangers which threaten the character and the soul; even these, parental watchfulness can not always avert. After all, the living parent must take shelter under the wing of a protecting Providence; and lay hold, by prayer, of the promised protection of heaven. But is not that same Providence, with ever-watchful eye, pledged, as it were, to overlook and guard the orphans when he takes out of sight the natural guardian; and thus renders his almighty care, so to speak, the more needful? "I have now no earthly parent," may the orphan say, "to look after me; but have I not God to take me up and carry me along the path of life? Beset as it is with dangers, and exposed at every step as I am to temptations, who so able as *He* to point out those dangers, to warn me against them; or who can so effectually neutralize the power of the tempter, and make a way for my escape? Can He not cause his angels to encamp around me, and peradventure commission even the glorified spirit of my departed parent, to act unseen, as a spiritual body-guard around my exposed career?"

Gone, but not Lost.

In the death of our friends, the idea, I have no doubt, is too prominent that they are for ever lost to us—that a sort of eternal separation has taken place—that never more shall their sympathies be felt, or their presence be enjoyed; and this may be true under certain circumstances; but on these painful circumstances we do not wish at present to dwell. It is *not* so, however, if the hopes of a Christian have been realized, and the life of faith has been enjoyed. We suppose the parents to have departed under these hopeful circumstances; to have slept in Jesus; and we indulge the expectation also, that the faith which dwelt in them may, through their prayers and their counsels, dwell in their surviving children; in which case, death is only a temporary separation, to be followed by a reünion in a region where blessed recognitions will take place, but where "adieus and farewells are a sound unknown."

The sacred writers speak of death as a *sleep*. It is not, in their view, an extinction, only a temporary repose—a sort of recuperative process, by which, according to the beautiful analogy, even

the body will put on new vigor, and shine in a lustre all divine. And the soul! Oh! that will be enjoying its true, proper life; expanding its wings in the celestial atmosphere, or using them on errands to the loved pilgrims left behind. "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ." What means the Apostle by this aspiration? Surely death is not an extinction of the being—not even a *suspension* of the active powers of the soul. The body sleeps, but the soul awakes in the image and the likeness of God. The last pulsation

> "Unbinds its chain, breaks up its cell,
> And gives it with its God to dwell."

Such are the views which we ought to take of the departure of Christian friends. Religion forbids not the tear to flow; nor rebukes the rising sigh. By his own example, Jesus our Lord has sanctified grief. The tears which dropped at the grave of Lazarus were a sacred tribute to humanity. But sorrow is not the only emotion which love should beget at the graves of the departed. Hope should mingle her bright songs and rainbow hues with the tears we shed; and we should listen, as we hear our Lord saying on the occasion alluded to, "Thy brother shall rise again." Yes, the Christian shall rise again. Death shall yield

up its prey, and the grave give back its treasured dust; and the song shall be, from welcoming angels and rising saints: "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?"

Words of Comfort.

There is, therefore, every reason to be comforted in view of the death of those who have walked with God on earth. If a beloved parent has left you, and joined that "part of the host which has crossed the flood," we may say to you: "Be comforted; God will take you up!" Have confidence in him! The stroke which has severed you from the earthly parent should drive you to take refuge in the bosom of your Heavenly Parent. Do you feel lonely now? Do you miss the sympathy of the loved sire or matron? Remember God offers you *His* sympathy and succor. Do you ask, Where now shall I look for counsel? Who will guide my inexperienced footsteps? The answer comes from the sacred oracles: "I will guide thee by my counsel;" "I will lead thee in paths which thou hast not known. I will make darkness light before thee, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto thee, and not forsake thee." "In all thy

ways acknowledge me, and I will direct thy paths." Ah! but my home is desolate; the protecting wing of parental care is no more over me! How can I meet the perils and temptations which everywhere beset the path of life? Again I hear a voice saying: "I will be a Father of the fatherless." "My providence is over all, and through all, and in all. My eye is upon thee, and my unseen arm will be around thee; and if need be, I will give my angels charge over thee to keep thee; lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Where canst thou go, where I am not? "If thou takest the wings of the morning, and dwellest in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall my hand lead thee, and my right hand shall hold thee."

Dwell, therefore, "in the secret places of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Say of the Lord: "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God; in him will I trust." "Call upon him, and he will answer thee; He will be with thee in trouble; He will deliver thee and honor thee. With long life will he satisfy thee, and show thee his salvation."

Thus making God thy refuge, and walking in his ways, thou shalt escape a thousand evils to which otherwise thou wouldst be exposed, enjoy

a peace which on no other conditions could be realized; and sustain the trials of life with a patience which nothing else could impart. And when the end shall come; when thy feet shall touch the brink of the land of shadows, and the great question is, shall the gate of death open to the gates of glory? shall I go up to be with the loved ones who have entered within the vail? it will be no small consolation to be able to say: "Yes, I am going to join them; to enjoy once more an intercourse with them which had been interrupted in sorrow, but which is now to be renewed and perpetuated amid the bliss of heaven!"

Poems.

THERE is a world of death beneath our feet;
There is a world of life above our heads:
Here ruins, graves, dry bones, fallen blossoms meet;
There God, in light and air, his glory spreads.

BEND not thy light-desiring eyes below—
  There thy own shadow waits upon thee ever;
But raise thy looks to heaven, and lo!
  The shadeless sun rewards thy weak endeavor.
Who sees the dark, is dark; but turn towards the light,
And thou becom'st like that which fills thy sight.

Poems on the Death of a Parent.

On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture.

O! that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see—
The same, that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic chain
To quench it) here shines on me till the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honor with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly as the precept were her own:
And while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief—

Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream that thou art she.
My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss:
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss.
Ah! that maternal smile! It answers—yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery-window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was. Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot;
But though I less deplore thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt, our name is heard no more;
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,

'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced:
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit or confectionery plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheek bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone, and glowed;
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall—
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks,
That humor interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honors to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere—
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile,)
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.

But no—what here we call our life is such
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
Thou as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed)
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the flood, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore,
'Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;'
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain the rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed;
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tost,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet oh! the thought, that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now farewell! Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;

To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine:
And while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

COWPER.

A Ministering Angel.

ORPHAN, thou most sorely stricken
Of the mourners thronging earth,
Clouds half-veil thy brightest sunshine,
Sadness mingles with thy mirth.
Yet although that gentle bosom,
Which has pillowed oft thy head,
Now is cold, thy mother's spirit
Can not rest among the dead.
Still her watchful eye is o'er thee
Through the day, and still at night
Hers the eye that guards thy slumber,
Making thy young dreams so bright.
Oh! the friends, the friends, we've cherished,
How we weep to see them die!
All unthinking they're the angels
That will guide us to the sky!

EMILY JUDSON.

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

How blest is our mother, bereft
Of all that could burden her mind!
How easy the soul that has left
This wearisome body behind;
Of evil incapable thou
Whose relics with envy I see;
No longer in misery now,
No longer a sinner like me.

This earth is affected no more
With sickness, or shaken with pain:
The war in the members is o'er,
And never shall vex her again.
No anger henceforward, or shame,
Shall redden this innocent clay;
Extinct is the animal flame,
And passion is vanished away.

This languishing head is at rest,
Its thinking and aching are o'er;
This quiet, immovable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more;
This heart is no longer the seat
Of trouble and torturing pain;
It ceases to flutter and beat,
It never shall flutter again.

The lids she so seldom could close,
By sorrow forbidden to sleep,
Sealed up in their mortal repose,
Have strangely forgotten to weep:
The fountains can yield no supplies,
These hollows from water are free;
The tears are all wiped from these eyes,
And evil they never shall see.

C. WESLEY.

The Healing Hand.

As when some fair temple is o'erthrown
By earthquake, or by hostile hand laid waste,
At first it lies, stone rudely rent from stone
A confused, ruinous heap, and all defaced;

Yet visit that fallen ruin by and by,
And what a hand of healing has been there,
How sweetly do the placid sunbeams lie
On the green sward which all the place doth wear.

And what rich odors from the flowers are borne—
From flowers and flowering weeds, which even within
The rents and fissures of those walls forlorn
Have made their home, yea thence their sustenance win!

So Time no less has gentle skill to heal,
When our fair hopes have fallen, our earth-built towers,
How busy wreck and ruin to conceal
With a new overgrowth of leaves and flowers.

Nor time alone—a better hand is here,
Where it has wounded, watching to upbind;
Which when it takes away in love severe,
Doth some austerer blessing leave behind.

Oh! higher gifts has brought this mournful Time,
Than all those years which did so smoothly run;
For what if they, life's flower and golden prime,
Had something served to knit our hearts in one;

Yet doth that all seem little now, compared
With our brief fellowship in tears and pain—
To share the things which we have newly shared,
This makes a firmer bond, a holier chain;

To have together held that aching head,
To have together heard that piteous moan,
To have together knelt beside that bed,
When life was flitting, and when life had flown;

And to have one of ours, whose ashes sleep
Where the great church its solemn shadow flings;
Oh! love has now its roots that stretch more deep,
That strike and stretch beneath the grave of things.

Oh! more than this, yet holier bonds there are,
For we his spirit shall to ours feel nigh,
And know he lives, whenever we in prayer
Hold with heaven's saintly throng communion high.

Then wherefore more?—or wherefore this to thee,
A faithful suppliant at that inner shrine,
At which who kneel, to them 'tis given to see
How pain and grief and anguish are divine?

"Whosoever shall confess Me."

O Jesus! Lord—the way, the truth,
The life, the crown of all
Who here on earth confess thy name;
Oh! hear us when we call.

We bring to mind, with grateful joy
Thy servants, who of old
Withstood the snares of earth and hell,
And now thy face behold.

Who sought on earth the joys of prayer,
And that communion knew,
Which saints and angels share above
With those who seek it too.

Vouchsafe us, Lord, we pray thee now,
To us it may be given
Like them to live and die in thee,
And with them rise to heaven.

The Only Refuge.

Shadows are faithless, and the rocks are false;
No trust in brass, no trust in marble walls;
Poor cots are even as safe as princes' halls.

Great God! there is no safety here below;
Thou art my fortress, Thou that seem'st my foe,
'Tis thou that strik'st the stroke must guard the blow.

Thou art my God, by thee I fall or stand;
Thy grace hath given me courage to withstand
All tortures, but my conscience, and thy hand.

I know thy justice is thyself; I know,
Just God, thy very self is mercy too;
If not to thee, where, whither shall I go?

Then work thy will; if passion bid me flee,
My reason shall obey; my wings shall be
Stretched out no further than from Thee to Thee.

The Remission of Sins.

While thine avenging arrows, Lord,
Encompass us around,
What hand but that which caused the smart
Can cure the deadly wound?

Depart, vain world, for how canst thou
Relieve the festering sore?
Thy comfort is but vanity,
And irritates the more.

We tremble, Lord, beneath thy rod,
But we do not despair;
We see thy good Physician's hand
In all he bids us bear.

But oh! so fierce the contest burns,
Good Lord, no more delay;
Oh! yield not to their deadly foes
Thy people for a prey.

Our prayer is heard; our foes depart,
And we once more take breath:
Thy death, O Christ! relieves the soul
From all its fears of Death.

All praise and glory be ascribed
To God who reigns above;
Who scourges those whom He receives,
And chastens them in love.

The Restless Heart.

"The heart is restless till it rests in Thee."

Disquieted, and desolate and lone,
My heart within me sinks,
And filled with bitterness in secret known,
The cup of trembling drinks:
Oh! where, when in mute agony it bends,
Are love and sympathy of human friends?

The sorrows of my spirit are enlarged,
My eyes are full of tears;
The grief with which my soul is over-charged
Excites strange doubts and fears:
Alas! I seek, I call, in vain, in vain,
On earthly friendship to relieve my pain!

I faint and fall because the way is dark,
That I through life must tread;
Is there no counsellor within the Ark
By whom I can be led?
Is there no loving voice to whisper rest,
Unto the heavy-laden and oppressed?

No! human sympathy is all too weak,
To satisfy my heart;
And earthly accents have not learned to speak
Words that can peace impart:
Thy best support, O poor mortality!
Would fail to stem the tears of misery.

Oft dost Thou, Jesus, lest from thee we stray,
Withdraw the helping hand
Which soothed our wounds, and wiped our tears away,
That so our souls may stand
Nearer thy cross, and daily feel and see,
"The heart is restless till it rests in Thee!"

Sleeping in Jesus.

Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever makes to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose
Unbroken by the last of foes.

Asleep in Jesus! oh! how sweet,
To be for such a slumber meet;
With holy confidence to sing
That Death has lost his venomed sting.

Asleep in Jesus! peaceful rest
Whose waking is supremely blest;
No fear, no woe, shall dim that hour
That manifests a Saviour's power.

Asleep in Jesus! oh! for me
May such a blissful refuge be!
Securely shall my ashes lie,
Waiting the summons from on high.

Asleep in Jesus! time nor space
Debars this precious "hiding-place:"
On Indian plains, on Lapland snows,
Believers find the same repose.

Asleep in Jesus! far from thee
Thy kindred and their graves may be;
But thine is still a blessed sleep,
From which none ever wakes to weep.

MRS. MACKAY.

I Cling to Thee.

WHAT though the world deceitful prove,
And earthly friends and joys remove;
With patient, uncomplaining love
Still would I cling to Thee!

Oft when I seem to tread alone
Some barren waste with thorns o'er grown,
Thy voice of love, in tenderest tone
Whispers, "Still cling to ME!"

Though faith and hope awhile be tried,
I ask not, need not, aught beside:
How safe, how calm, how satisfied,
The souls that cling to thee!

They fear not Satan or the grave,
They feel thee near, and strong to save,
Nor fear to cross e'en Jordan's wave,
Because they cling to Thee!

Blest is my lot, whate'er befall:
What can disturb me, what appal,
Whilst as my Rock, my Strength, my All,
Saviour, I cling to thee?

Perhaps an erring wish I knew
To read my future fate;
And Thou wouldst say: "Thy days are few,
And vain thy best estate!"

Perhaps Thy glory seemed my choice,
Whilst I secured my own;
And thus my kind Reprover's voice
Tells me he works alone!

Oh! silence Thou this murmuring will,
Nor bid thy rough wind stay,
Till with a furnace hotter still
My dross is purged away!

The Death of a Friend.

BY

REV. CLEMENT M. BUTLER, D.D.

Words of Scripture.

Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for, stand fast in the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer.—Philippians 4 : 1; Romans 12 : 12.

There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.—1 Corinthians 10 : 13.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be punished.—2 Peter 2 : 9.

Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.—James 5 : 7, 8.

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.—James 5 : 10, 11.

Wherefore be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.—Hebrews 6 : 12.

Some were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.—Hebrews 11 : 35-40.

The Death of a Friend.

"It is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness," says the great Lord Bacon. Sounding the praises of friendship, he declares: "The parable of Pythagoras is dark but true—*Eat not the heart.* Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves to are cannibals of their own hearts; but one thing is most admirable, which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friends worketh two contrary effects; *for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halfs.*"

Yet, highly as the great philosopher esteemed true friendship, he was compelled to confess that it was rare. "There is little friendship in the

world," he declares; "and least of all between equals." The poet echoes the sentiment:

> "And what is friendship but a name;
> A charm that lulls to sleep;
> A shade that follows wealth or fame,
> And leaves the wretch to weep?"

The sweet Psalmist of Israel joins in its praises, but is not compelled, with the philosopher and the poet, to mourn over its fleetness and its unreality. In his lamentation over his departed friend Jonathan, whose soul was knit with his soul, he sings, with a sadly-sweet remembrance of the past, "Very pleasant hast thou been to me, my brother Jonathan. Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman." There was an element in this friendship, which was wanting in that over whose infrequency and insincerity the philosopher moralized and the poet sung. The hand that knit their heart-strings was divine; and it bound them together into a beautiful and inseparable oneness, by the imperishable ties of holy and heavenly love.

Such was the friendship of Jonathan and David. It has become proverbial for its truthfulness and steadiness and warmth. It constitutes a beautiful model of Christian friendship. We will contemplate the subject of *the love and loss*

of friends, in connection with the history of the friendship of the shepherd's son and the heir of the throne of Israel.

Christians love each other in the Lord.

I. The friendship of Christians must rest on a religious basis. It must find its uniting principle in the mutual love of God, and the mutual participation of the grace of Jesus. Jonathan strengthened the hand of David "in God." He loved him from no selfish motive. It must have been religious principle alone that could have enabled Jonathan, the brave, capable, and accomplished heir of a throne, not only in accordance with the obviously-manifested will of God, to relinquish his own claim to a shepherd boy, but also to take his preferred and praised rival to his heart. In doing this, he rose above nature. He acquiesced in the will of God. He gladly threw himself into the plans of God. He preferred God's will to the gratification of his own selfishness and ambition. He loved him who was loved of God. And such, in their principle, Christian friendships always are. The heart of a child of God is given, first and

supremely, to him. It can love that only which bears his image. It will love it "in the Lord." Loving not the world, nor the things of the world, so far as they are opposite to or separated from God, how can it love an unholy heart, which *is* the world—a microcosm in which all enmities against God are gathered?

Christian Friendship does not depend on Natural Affinities.

II. Hence this Christian friendship does not depend for its existence on the affinities of natural character. It is found in those who resemble, and those who differ from each other in natural traits. Christian friends "are *taught of God* to love one another." It is the love which "*is of God*," with which they love. It is the love of St. John for Gaius, whom he "loved in the truth." Thus a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and a love in the truth, and in God, it rises above natural affection, and lays hold of that in each other which is above nature, and which, derived from God, is alike in all. It is the superinduced loveliness which they possess who are made "partakers of the divine nature," which wins their affections, and which gives new attractiveness to the charms, and takes

away repulsiveness from the deformities, of natural character. Hence that strange phenomenon to the children of the world—the cordial, reciprocated, equal affection of those who, utterly unlike in position, education, refinement, manners, culture, habits, and associations, are yet united by ties higher and purer, and by a more essential similarity of soul, amidst all their accidental and temporary differences, than can obtain in the closest resemblances and congenialities of unrenewed humanity. Hence that intimate, warm, and enduring affection, which frequently exists between those who widely differ in temperament, tastes, gifts, and occupations. Hence that still closer and more beautiful *friendship*, in which the affinities of natural character are strengthened and elevated by the grace of God, and by the mutual love of the truth and of the Saviour. This is the great solvent—*the grace of God*—which reduces dissimilar souls into sameness; and this is the affinity—*the mutual love of Christ and God*—which blends them into one. These mighty, transforming, assimilating agencies it is, which bind Paul, the lofty Apostle, in brotherly affection to Onesimus, the humble slave. These it is which create and sustain the beautiful friendship of Jonathan and David. It is friendship

which, not insensible of mutual faults, rejoices in those graces of the Spirit which are the beginnings of spiritual loveliness, which shall be perfect in heaven and charm the angels. Exacting human friendship cries out: "I do not love thy faults;" and wounded human friendship retorts: "A friend would not have seen them;" but Christian friends can see them in each other with undiminished affection; and not unfrequently their sins and weaknesses are the occasions of the most touching and winning exhibitions of repentance, humility, self-denial, and magnanimity. Their strength is made perfect in weakness; their holiness is the contrast of their sin; their supernatural graciousness and excellence shows brightest on the dark back-ground of natural depravity. Holy friendship is the blending of higher affinities than those of mere human affection.

Christian Friendship is Warm and True.

III. In such friendship there is a warmth and steadiness and fidelity all its own. This was illustrated in the love of Jonathan and David. When Saul envied and persecuted and would have slain David, "Jonathan's soul was knit to his soul."

How touching was the affection and fidelity of Jonathan for David, at the time when he went forth as an outlaw, wandering "like a partridge in the mountains," and hunted by the emissaries of Saul! It is an affection which is deepened by adversity. In a stolen interview, in a lonely wood, Jonathan announced to David that he must flee; and then, "kissing one another and weeping one with another, until *David exceeded*," he said to his banished friend: "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn, both of us in the Lord, saying, the Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever." Faithful friend! The lonely wood shall witness thy affection to be no less true to David, the hunted exile of the desert, than to David the conqueror of the Philistine, the theme of the triumphal songs of Jewish maidens, and the hope of Israel and Judah. All that is told of that interview is the simple but expressive statement, that "he strengthened him in God." Blessed office of sanctified affection, to strengthen the hand and the heart in God! How Jonathan strengthened David's heart; what words of promise or what providences of mercy he adduced; what instances of the faithfulness of Israel's God he brought from the sacred records;

what satisfying and cheering words of unalterable personal affection he poured into the thirsty heart of the stricken outcast; what speech of blessedness beyond the grave, where no tyrants can annoy, and no disasters separate; what strong and heart-bracing words they were, we know not. We only know, that that lonely wood was witness of one of the most striking examples ever given of the elevation, the magnanimity, and the fidelity of religious friendship. It is fit that a friend, as faithful and noble as the world ever knew, should be praised in strains of affectionate eulogy as tender and beautiful as the world ever heard: "O Jonathan! thou wast slain in thy high places! I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been to me. Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman."

The Delicacy and Elevation of Holy Friendship.

IV. There is another characteristic of religious friendship, which gives it a peculiar elevation, and makes it, in some respects, more blessed than even the sanctified affection of those who are united by the ties of blood and of close

relationship. In the latter case, the closeness and continuance of the contact of heart with heart, frequently produce chafing and irritation. The intimacies of domestic life in family relations, which affection craves and rejoices in, furnish constant occasions in which the mutual infirmities, selfishnesses, peculiarities, and sins of those who are nearest and dearest, come in conflict, and wound and disturb each other, interrupt the current of their affection, darken their enjoyment, and accumulate memories of sorrow and self-reproach. They not only *know*, but they are made *practically to suffer* from each other's infirmities and faults. Their native antagonisms and uncongenialities of character can not lie latent, but are constantly evolved by the duties and the incidents of daily and domestic life. Now, in this respect, Christian friends are in a position more favorable to uninterrupted and peaceful affection, than Christian relatives. They are near enough to warm each other, but not to chafe. They are near enough to know, without often or greatly suffering from, each other's infirmities of temper. They see in each other that which is purest, highest, and most spiritual, apart, in great measure, from that which belongs to the lower nature. Hence it is that Christian

friendships have a charm and an elevation all their own. They are not stale from custom. They have not the dullness which arises from monotony. They do not subside into the indifference which familiarity and constant presence are apt to engender. They do not exhaust and weary the social feelings. They are quickened and renewed and deepened by meetings and partings. If they have not that strong, instinctive, close-cleaving love which blood-relationships, by the very constitution of our nature, kindle, they have a delicacy and respectfulness and purity, and a bond of union exclusively of the heart and soul, which kindred ties can not possess. We know not but this feeling was in the heart of David, when, eulogizing the affection of his departed friend, he declared that it was "wonderful," "passing the love of woman." The love of woman—of the maiden for her lover, the wife for her husband, the mother for her children—is the strongest, richest, and most beautiful of all human affections; their model and their highest measure; the standard with which we compare all other, and to which we make all other approximate when we praise it as deep and true and warm. Now, as this love is usually exhibited and praised as affianced or wedded or maternal

love, we know not in what respect David could have ventured to represent the love of Jonathan as passing that of woman, unless we conceive him to have had that idea of religious friendship which we have endeavored to unfold; or unless we unwarrantably suppose the Prophet-Poet, who "spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost," to have indulged in the conceits and exaggerations of human fancy. Love "passing that of woman" in warmth and strength of fidelity, the whole world rises up to testify that there can not be! It could surpass it only in that peculiar elevation and that exclusively soul-union, *which is possible alone in the absence of* the ties of kindred and of blood. In this respect it is wonderful, peculiar, and alone—passing the love of woman—in that it is divested of the element of the sensitive and instinctive affection of kindred and of blood. It is the communion of hearts and minds and souls. It is not the intertwining of the roots of the vine under ground, which not unfrequently is followed by the wide divergence of the branches; but it is the meeting of the branches as they stretch upward, and the mutual interclasping of a thousand delicate tendrils. "Better is a neighbor that is near than a brother that is far off."

GREAT and cheering are the blessings which are connected with Christian friendship.

The Joys of Brotherly Affection.

I. It furnishes rich satisfaction to the best affections of our hearts. There is joy in love. "Rejoicing in love," is an expression which all human and angelic hearts understand. Love is not only the fulfilling of the law; but it is the perfection and the best joy of our nature. Our happiness depends on our affections. It is not on intellect, or genius, or success, or fame, that happiness reposes, but upon the right love of that which is worthy to be loved. Happiness is the outgrowth, the flowering of right affections. We can conceive it only as springing from love. From mind power may issue; from genius beauty may be born; from conscience remorse or peace may come; but from love alone can happiness proceed. It is the fragrance of that consummate flower. So David felt when he exclaimed: "*Very pleasant* hast thou been to me, my brother!" So Solomon realized when he wrote: "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so

doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel." This joy of the affections is most pure and peaceful. Like aromatic perfumes in the sultry climates of the East, it is gently and pleasantly refreshing. It elevates while it exhilarates the heart. Is is not followed, as is mere human joy, by reäction of regret and gloom. It is pleasant in the experience; it is pleasant in the memory; it is more pleasant still in the hope which it awakens of full and uninterrupted satisfaction in a higher and immortal sphere. Christian friendship is blessed in giving, and more blessed in receiving evidence of warmth and disinterestedness. There was not unmingled sorrow in the parting of Jonathan and David in the wild wood of the wilderness of Ziph. There was joy in their affections; and the sting of their agony was the interruption of that joy.

The Wise Counsels of Christian Friends.

II. One of the most blessed offices which Christian friendship can discharge, is intimated in the language of Solomon: "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by *hearty counsel*." We often stand

in need of "hearty counsel;" of sincere, disinterested, dispassionate, affectionate, holy, and wise advice. We are often at a loss to discern the path of duty, because our duties seem to be in conflict. Standing in the midst of several seemingly conflicting obligations, and pressed by them on every hand, we can not discern their true position and the urgency of their respective claims, so well as our friend can do, who stands apart, and can accurately and dispassionately measure their obligation, and discern their several relations and positions. We are often prevented by our passions and our interests from seeing a duty or a sin, which in the case of another we should be able instantly to detect. We are apt to look through the telescope of selfishness from the magnifying end, when we gaze upon the duties and the objects which we love, and they seem large and near; and we are as apt to reverse it when we turn to duties and objects which are repulsive, and they are thus made to appear distant, unimportant, and minute. Such being our infirmity, how precious is the counsel of a faithful friend! We have so often erred; we have so fatally yielded to pride, prejudice, and passion; our best judgment has been so often folly, that we have learned not to lean to our own under-

standing, in affairs that most nearly concern ourselves. How blessed it is, in such circumstances, to have a friend to whom we can throw open all our heart; to whom we are not loth to show all our weakness, folly, and temptation; of whose sympathy and of whose wise and holy counsel we may be assured! This is a case in which the simple may instruct the wise, and the feeble support the strong. This blessed office of friendship was most faithfully discharged by Jonathan to David. When Saul sought his life, David gave himself up to the counsel and the guidance of his friend. And how wise, affectionate, and faithful that guidance was! David knew that Jonathan's soul was knit to his soul. He relied upon the covenant of friendship between them. He knew that in the perils that environed him he needed counsel. Jonathan disclosed to David his father's purpose to kill him. He withdrew David from the presence of Saul, until he had secured the tyrant's promise that his friend's life should be secure. When that promise was violated, and David fled, his friend followed him to his retreat; he cheered him with sympathy; he made one more effort to appease the brutal and envious wrath of Soul; he devised a skillful method by which the poor innocent outcast might know

whether he should return or flee; and by his "hearty counsel" saved his beloved friend, by parting from him for ever, and by consigning him, a homeless wanderer, to wild wildernesses and gloomy caves. Great reason had David, then, to say to Jonathan as he had afterwards to say to wise Abigail, and as Christian friends have frequently to say to each other in periods of danger and of doubt: "Blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou."

The Mutual Comforts and Supports of Friends.

III. And this leads to the remark that Christian friendship greatly strengthens religious principles and feelings, is a great help to a holy and heavenly life, and a great source of comfort in trials and sorrows. God graciously allows and encourages the knitting of heart to heart, in holy friendship, as a means to support and comfort them. "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Our blessed Lord had respect to this want of the human heart, when he sent forth his disciples two by two. It is at the same time a fruit of the new nature whose law is love, and matures and

strengthens the holy principle from which it springs. Striking to this effect is the delightful exhortation of St. Peter: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Even the dauntless and burning Apostle Paul felt the animating influence of Christian friendship. When he was on his way as a prisoner to Rome, and the brethren came out to meet him as far as the Appii forum, "*when he saw them he thanked God and took courage.*" His heart was strengthened by their sympathy and affection. Doubtless when he and Silas made the walls of their midnight prison ring with the praises which they sang to God, it was their mutual suffering, and their reciprocal sympathy and encouragement, and the presentation to each other of the promises and the grace of Christ, which made their souls so joyfully triumphant over agony and shame. Has not Christ himself become man, that he might be to all a tender Friend, a compassionate High-Priest, as well as one almighty to save? Did he not sanctify friendship, and consecrate it for all his followers, in that personal love wherewith he loved Lazarus and Martha and Mary, and favored John? We bless him for this gracious arrange-

ment, and for this manifestation of distinguishing friendship and affection. We see how Christian friends, in loving each other more and more, do not thereby withdraw from him the love which is his due; but rather, in that very act, put forth a deeper love for him. For that which in their friends wins from them ever higher and purer affection, they know is all from Christ; and that which in Christ they most love and prize. That divine Spirit which serves to purify each other's hearts, and have for each other an added charm and a clearer brightness, at the same time and by the same means, makes them mirrors more distinct to reflect the image of the blessed Master. When they are glad in each other, as the redeemed and sanctified, they are glad in God and Christ; when they strengthen each other's hands, "they strengthen them in God." Such love is inexpressibly precious in sorrow. "A friend loveth at all times; and a brother is born for adversity." When David sang, "Very pleasant hast thou been to me," we may be sure that he thought of his faithful friend, not alone in connection with the splendors of the Jewish court, and the days of his triumph and success, but no less in connection with his sympathy when Saul sought his life, and

the wilderness of Ziph witnessed their sorrowful farewell.

Such being the love of Christian friends, and such the blessedness of that love, how great must be the sorrow which follows upon their loss!

The Agony of Separation.

I. There is an agony in the first separation of the heart from the loved of earth, which is keen, clamorous, and absorbing. Its cry is, "I am distressed for thee, my brother!" its passionate wail is, "O Absolom! my son! my son!" The soul seems to be resolved into an emotion; and to be incapable for a time of recalling or entertaining the thoughts and truths which should calm its tumult, and insinuate their pensive peace. Drawn down towards the grave in which the departed friend is laid, the heart at first refuses to be comforted; and says: "I *will* go down to the grave mourning." It goes constantly to the grave, *to weep there.* And this first wild, absorbing grief, let us not harshly censure—let us tenderly regard. "*Jesus wept!*" It is no part of the work of

religion to eradicate the affections. It refines, deepens, and enriches them. It makes human hearts worthier to be loved in life and worthier to be wept for when they depart. Let, then, the bereaved friend weep and wail over his loss. It is "the cry of the human." It is love in its highest intensity; and love is not sin. It is connected with salutary self-reproach. It will lead to deep self-searchings. It will prepare the heart for enduring peace. Let that wild tumultuous agony do its appointed work! The more deeply ploughed up by sorrow that heart shall be, the deeper and more securely will the seeds of joy be planted, and the more vigorously will they spring. "Sorrow is a sacred thing." If the heart does not murmur, but only weep—then let it weep! If it is a Christian's heart, it will soon begin to *think;* and its first thought will be of Christ and heaven.

The Chastenings of Bereavement.

II. The loss of friends makes earth seem poor and worthless, and invests heaven with new beauty to our hope. It enables us not coldly to *know*, but vividly to *realize*, that earth is not our home, and it brings heaven nearer to us than

before. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me," is then the frequent, nay, the habitual meditation of the bereaved heart. It sees this world and this life in a light in which they were never before presented. An amazing change seems to have passed upon himself and upon all human objects and pursuits, since his friend has left a void space around him. It seems now as if that friend had stood between him and some most solemn truths and realities, which it was necessary and salutary for him to see, and hid them from his view. He sees now that he is not a resident upon earth, but only a pilgrim passing through it. He sees that all the bustle and activity of life around him are not those of dwellers in homes, but of sojourners at inns, and of passengers upon journeys. Strange, this realization, this new revelation to his experience, of the solemn facts of his probation, and of the transitory and inadequate nature of all human joys and blessings; strange that he should not have *felt* as well as known these solemn truths before! It enables him to take a just view of life and duty. It abates his eager desire of temporal blessings. It makes him lay out the future of life on a new and moderate plan. It sheds a sobriety and calmness over the whole of his

career. It prevents him from indulging great expectations and hopes of any earthly future. It checks him when he is tempted too eagerly to enjoy; it restrains and soothes him when he is about too bitterly to suffer. Thus the grief which at first is agony, and then subsides into seriousness, at last becomes that sweet heavenly-mindedness, which is at the same time most fit for the stern duties and the permitted enjoyments of the inevitable trials of the life that is, and for the blessedness of the life to come.

Hence we see that it is impossible even to examine into the nature of the grief which is experienced upon the loss of friends, without perceiving at the same time, that it is accompanied with and followed by many blessings and consolations.

Heaven draws near to the Mourner.

I. There is the blessing which we saw to be involved in its very nature—the blessing of a deepened sense of the worthlessness of earth, and

the blessedness of heaven. But let the bereaved mourner remember that it is possible to have a vivid sense of the unsatisfactoriness of earth, without having a corresponding sense of the desirableness of heaven, and a corresponding desire and relish of its spiritual and holy joys. We may cry out, "Vanity of vanities!" over the poor joys of departing time, and have no heart to give a rapturous *all hail!* to the rich bliss of coming eternity. God would not only wean us from the earth, but he would win us for the skies. He would not only have us to say in sadness, "He shall not return to me;" but he would have us hopefully to add, "I shall go to him." This is the great intended blessing of bereavement—the purification of the soul—its elevation towards heaven—its weanedness from earth—its *meetness* for "the inheritance of the saints in light." Such always is the intended, and such is the frequently realized result of the discipline of sorrow. Myriads now in glory praise God that he made them stand sobbing over the graves of relatives and friends. The sorrow which grace accompanies purifies the soul. It precipitates its grosser particles, and enables it the more easily to ascend.

Dying Friends leave with us Precious Memories.

II. And when a beloved friend has left us, how sweet is the memory of him which remains! In that vivid and soothing remembrance of his virtues and affections, and of the happy hours of converse that we passed with him upon earth, he seems to have left the best and purest part of himself behind. We sometimes feel the beauty and drink in the joy of friendship while our friends are upon the earth, more richly and fully when we are separated from them, than when we are united.

> "Oft when we pine afar from those we love,
> More close are knit the spirit's sympathies,
> By mutual prayer; distance itself doth prove
> A greater nearness; with such stronger ties
> Spirit with spirit talks, that when our eyes
> Behold each other, something sinks within,
> Mocked by the touch of life's realities."

If this be true of our feelings towards a friend who is separated from us, but still on earth, how much more emphatically true is it of the friends who have passed into the heavens! How beautiful are the dead! How bereaved affection loves to enumerate all the the virtues and the charms

which their souls possessed here on earth! Those who sit and listen to our prolonged and affectionate eulogies think that we exaggerate their virtues. Nay, we only now see them as they were. We now do them justice. We now see them apart from the infirmities and sins with which they were connected and interrupted; and out of the circle of daily human cares and associations, in the midst of which we could not discern their loveliness, and appreciate their worth. We saw the gem only under the films and incrustations which dimmed its lustre and marred its perfection; and now that we think of it as apart from its earthly infirmities and environments, we see that it was fit to be fashioned and polished for the diadem of our King. The joy of our intercourse remains with us, and all the pain of it is forgotten. "Very pleasant hast thou been to me," do our hearts murmur.

The Beauty of a Death of Faith.

III. And besides this memory of them in life, we have sweet recollections of their peaceful or joyful death. It was when they were about to leave us, that we discovered the full beauty of the hearts, which we had not prized as we then

saw that we should have done. But ere they left us, they spoke such soothing and blessed words! They gave us sweet assurances of their affection — and it seems now to us to have been the love of angels! They told us in low-breathed whispers of a present Saviour; of the rich peace of God that passed their understanding and their power of expression; of sweet foretastes of the bliss of the heavenly world. They bade us never to forget or doubt that as our day our strength should be. They told us how love had cast out fear, and faith had banished all misgiving. They spoke to us of "Jerusalem our happy home!" They exhorted us to be patient, faithful, and devoted; and promised to meet us soon on the heavenly shore. As they sunk into their last repose, and fell asleep in Jesus, they whispered to us, in tones so full of love that we knew they were in sight of heaven, because heaven had already entered into their hearts:

"Do not weep!
Never fell so sweet a sleep
Over mortal eyes. At night
All the hills with snow were white,
And the tempest moaning drear;
But I wake with Summer here.
Haste to take my parting hand!
We are pushing from the land,

And adown a lovely stream
Gently floating. Is't a dream?
For the oarsman near me sings,
Keeping time with snowy wings."

And when these parting words were lingering on our ear, and the loved one's spirit had departed, so did we wish to feel assured that it loved us to the last, and that it went away with angels, that in the intense silence that followed its departure, we seemed to hear that receding voice, saying to its celestial escort:

"Stranger, with the wings of snow,
Singing by me as we row,
Tell my dear ones on the shore
I have need of them no more;
Weeping will not let them see
That an angel goes with me!"

The Sweet Hope of Re-union.

IV. And besides these sweet memories, we have hopes as sweet of re-union with departed friends in heaven. The bereaved have ever loved to cull and grasp the intimations scattered through the word of God, that those who die in Christ shall know and love each other in the better world. And those intimations are neither few nor doubtful. They find that our earthly

life is to be remembered, and that all its history is to give perpetual raptures to the new song of praise for redeeming love. Then of necessity all our human relationships and friends will be recalled and recognized. They find that the resurrection-body of Jesus retained its identity and the appearance that it wore on earth. Hence they believe that it will be with the harvest as with its first-fruits. They read that it will be their privilege to meet and recognize Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and hence they infer that they shall meet and know those who have been personally near and dear. They know that the kingdom of Christ in heaven is the same as the kingdom of Christ on earth—here militant, and there triumphant. They remember how often the apostles rejoice in the thought of meeting and greeting their loved converts in the upper sanctuary—how they call them their glory and joy and crown in heaven. Hence they can rest in the sure and undoubted hope of reünion with all their sainted dead in the better world. Hence they realize a present communion and fellowship with the absent. They know that the departure of their friend is not so much a *breaking up*, as an *extension* of their spiritual communion. That active mind, that warm heart, those living ener-

gies are not dead, but all enlarged, vivified, glorified, and blest! That pure and holy soul still thinks of, cares for, and loves us. In all these thoughts there is peace and consolation. They perceive that their departed friends, though absent, minister more to their spiritual progress than when they walked together in the house of God and took sweet counsel, and when they sat together in their earthly homes in pleasant and satisfying affection.

> When hearts which have on earth been one,
> By ruthless death are riven;
> Why does the one which death has reft
> Drag off in grief the one that's left,
> If not to meet — in heaven?

Thus the heart goes where *all* its treasure is, and a new benefit has been bestowed by the friend *departed* which is greater than any which, while *living*, it could have given. That friend has made heaven near, real and attractive.

Then let not the bereaved and stricken one sit down in inert gloom. He had a dear friend who was a poor child of earth; and now he has the same friend dearer than before, and transfigured into a glorified immortal. Then let him lift up his head in hope. Let him gird up his loins for duty. In view of the hope that is set before

him, let him be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as he knows that his labor and faith and patience shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Poems.

MORTAL! if life smile on thee, and thou find
All to thy mind,
Think who once did from heaven to hell descend,
Thee to befriend:
So shalt thou dare forego, at his dear call,
Thy best, thine all.

"O Father! not my will, but thine be done:"
So spake the Son.
Be this our charm, mellowing earth's ruder noise
Of griefs and joys;
That we may cling for ever to Thy breast,
In perfect rest!

Poems on the Death of a Friend.

On the Death of a Friend.

Oh! give them up to Him whose own
Those dear redeemed ones are!
Lo! on their wakening souls he breaks,
"The bright and morning star:"
His are they now for evermore—
The mystery and the conflict o'er—
The eternal city won.
As conquerors let them pass and go
Up from the fight of faith below,
The peace of God at last to know
In kingdoms of the sun!

"Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates!
Ye everlasting doors, give way!"
And let the Lord of glory's train
Through the bright courts of day!
We follow, too, ye loved ones gone;
We follow, faint but fearless, on,

To meet you where the Lamb once slain,
Amidst his ransomed Church on high
Shall dwell—and wipe from every eye
The tears that, through eternity,
Shall never flow again!

Oh! blessed are the dead in Christ!
Why will we mourn for them?
No more the stormy billows there
With weary hearts they stem.
No more they struggle here below
To guide, through many a gulf of woe,
Their being's fragile bark;
But, harbored in eternal rest,
By far oft-islands of the blest,
Calm on a sunlit ocean's breast,
Anchor their fearless ark.

Seem they to sleep?—'tis but as sleeps
The seed within the earth,
To burst forth to the brilliant morn
Of a more glorious birth.
Seem they to feel no breath of love
That o'er their icy brow will move
With tearful whispers warm?
'Tis that upon their spirit's ear
All heaven's triumphant music clear
Is bursting, where there comes not near
One tone of sorrow's storm.

MRS. HAMILTON.

Death of a Sister.

'Tis finished! the conflict is past,
The heaven-born spirit is fled;
Her wish is accomplished at last,
And now she's entombed with the dead.
The months of affliction are o'er—
The days and the nights of distress;
We see her in anguish no more—
She has found a happy release.

No sickness, or sorrow, or pain,
Shall ever disquiet her now;
For death to her spirit was gain,
Since Christ was her life when below.
Her soul has now taken its flight
To mansions of glory above,
To mingle with angels of light,
And dwell in the kingdom of love.

The victory now is obtained;
She's gone her Redeemer to see;
Her wishes she fully has gained—
She's now where she panted to be.
Then let us forbear to complain
That she has now gone from our sight;
We soon shall behold her again,
With new and redoubled delight.

ALEXANDER'S COL.

Gone.

Another hand is beckoning us,
Another call is given;
And glows once more with angel steps,
The path which reaches heaven.

Our young and gentle friend, whose smile
Made brighter summer hours,
Amid the frosts of Autumn time,
Has left us with the flowers.

No paling of the cheek of bloom,
Forewarned us of decay;
No shadow from the Silent Land,
Fell round our sister's way.

The light of her young life went down,
As sinks behind the hill
The glory of a setting star,
Clear, suddenly, and still.

As pure and sweet, her fair brow seemed
Eternal as the sky;
And like the brook's low song, her voice
A sound which could not die.

And half we deemed she needed not
The changing of her sphere,
To give to heaven a shining one,
Who walked an angel here.

The blessing of her quiet life
Fell on us like the dew;
And good thoughts, where her footsteps pressed,
Like fairy blossoms grew.

Sweet promptings unto kindest deeds
Were in her very look;
We read her face, as one who reads
A true and holy book:

The measures of a blessed hymn,
To which our hearts could move;
The breathing of an inward psalm,
A canticle of love.

We miss her in the place of prayer,
And by the hearth-fire's light;
We pause beside her door to hear
Once more her sweet "Good-night."

There seems a shadow on the day,
Her smile no longer cheers;
A dimness on the stars of night,
Like eyes that look through tears.

Alone unto our Father's will,
One thought hath reconciled:
That *He* whose love exceedeth ours,
Has taken home his child.

Fold her, O Father! in thine arms,
And let her henceforth be
A messenger of love, between
Our human hearts and Thee.

Still let her mild rebuking stand
Between us and the wrong,
And her dear memory serve to make
Our faith in goodness strong.

And grant that she, who trembling here,
Distrusted all her powers,
May welcome to her holier home,
The well-beloved of ours.

WHITTIER.

The Death of a Friend.

OH! stay thy tears, for they are blest
Whose days are past, whose toil is done;
Here midnight care disturbs our rest,
Here sorrow dims the noon-day sun.

For laboring Virtue's anxious toil,
For patient Sorrow's stifled sigh,
For Faith that marks the conqueror's spoil,
Heaven grants the recompense—to die.

How blest are they whose transient years
  Pass like an evening meteor's light;
Not dark with guilt, nor dim with tears;
  Whose course is short, unclouded, bright!

How cheerless were our lengthened way,
  Did heaven's own light not break the gloom,
Stream downward from eternal day,
  And cast a glory round the tomb!

Then stay thy tears: the blest above
  Have hailed a spirit's heavenly birth,
Sung a new song of joy and love,
  And why should anguish reign on earth?

ANDREWS NORTON.

A Prospect of Heaven.

THERE is a land of pure delight,
  Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
  And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
  And never-withering flowers:
Death like a narrow sea divides
  This heavenly land from ours,

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea;
And linger shivering on the brink
And fear to launch away.

Oh! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise
And see the Canaan that we love
With unbeclouded eyes;

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er—
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore.

WATTS.

"Place of Peace."

NEIGHBOR, accept our parting song—
The road is short, the rest is long:
The Lord brought here, the Lord takes hence—
This is no house of permanence.

On bread of mirth and bread of tears
The pilgrim fed these checkered years;
Now, landlord world, shut-to the door,
Thy guest is gone for evermore.

Gone to a realm of sweet repose,
His comrades bless him as he goes:
Of toil and moil the day was full,
A good sleep now—the night is cool.

Ye village bells, ring, softly ring,
And in the blessed Sabbath bring,
Which from this weary work-day tryst
Awaits God's folk through Jesus Christ.

And open wide, thou gate of Peace,
And let this other journey cease,
Nor grudge a narrow couch, dear neighbors,
For slumbers won by life-long labors.

Beneath these sods how close ye lie!
But many a mansion's in yon sky:
Even now, beneath the sapphire Throne,
Is his prepared through God's dear Son.

"I quickly come," that Saviour cries;
Yea, quickly come, this churchyard sighs:
Come, Jesus, come, we wait for thee—
Thine now and ever let us be.

They are all gone into a World of Light.

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimerings and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility!
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have showed them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear beauteous Death; the jewel of the just!
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that locked her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee!
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty!

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass;
Or else remove me hence unto that Hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

VAUGHAN.

Divine Faithfulness.

In the floods of tribulation
While the billows o'er me roll,
Jesus whispers consolation,
And supports my fainting soul.
Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! praise the Lord!

In his darkest dispensations,
Faithful doth the Lord appear,
With his richest consolations,
To reänimate and cheer:
Sweet affliction,
Thus to bring my Saviour near.

In the sacred page recorded
Thus his word securely stands:
"Fear not, I'm in trouble near thee,
Naught shall pluck you from my hands!"
Sweet affliction,
Every word my love demands.

S. PEARCE.

The Loosing of the Prisoner.

Lo! the prisoner is released,
Lightened of his fleshly load;
Where the weary are at rest,
He is gathered unto God!
Lo! the pain of life has past,
All his warfare now is o'er;
Death and hell behind are cast,
Grief and suffering are no more.

Yes, the Christian's course is run,
Ended is the glorious strife;
Fought the fight, the work is done,
Death is swallowed up of life!

Borne by angels on their wings,
Far from earth the spirit flies,
Finds his God, and sits and sings,
Triumphing in Paradise.

Let the world bewail their dead,
Fondly of their loss complain;
Brother, friend, by Jesus freed,
Death to thee, to us is gain:
Thou art entered into joy:
Let the unbelievers mourn
We in songs our lives employ
Till we all to God return.

WESLEY'S COL.

The Diverging Path.

THE path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
Through four sweet years arose and fell,
From flower to flower, from snow to snow.

And we with singing cheered the way,
And crowned with all the season lent,
From April on to April went,
And glad at heart from May to May:

But where the path we walked began
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
As we descended, following Hope,
There sat the Shadow feared of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,
And spread his mantle dark and cold;
And wrapped thee formless in the cold,
And dulled the murmur on my lip;

And bore thee where I could not see
Nor follow, though I walk in haste;
And think that somewhere in the waste,
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

TENNYSON.

"Of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named."

COME, let us join our friends above
That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle wings of love
To joys celestial rise:
Let all the saints terrestrial sing,
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King
In earth and heaven are one.

One family, we dwell in Him;
  One Church above, beneath;
Though now divided by the stream
  The narrow stream of death:
One army of the living God,
  To his command we bow—
Part of his host have crossed the flood,
  And part are crossing now.

Ten thousand to their endless home
  This solemn moment fly;
And we are to the margin come,
  And we expect to die.
His militant embodied host,
  With wishful looks we stand,
And long to see that happy coast
  And reach the heavenly land.

Our old companions in distress
  We haste again to see,
And, eager, long for our release
  And full felicity:
Even now by faith we join our hands
  With those that went before;
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands
  On the eternal shore.

Our spirits too shall quickly join,
  Like theirs with glory crowned,
And shout to see our Captain's sign,
  To hear his trumpet sound.

Oh! that we now might grasp our Guide.
Oh! that the word were given.
Come, Lord of hosts, the waves divide,
And land us all in heaven!

JOHN WESLEY.

A Prayer for Resignation.

O LORD! my best desires fulfill,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to thy will,
And make thy pleasure mine.

Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears?
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?

No! rather let me freely yield
What most I prize to thee,
Who never hast a good withheld,
Or wilt withhold from me.

Thy favor, all my journey through,
Thou art engaged to grant:
What else I want, or think I do,
'Tis better still to want.

Wisdom and Mercy guide my way—
Shall I resist them both;
A poor, blind creature of a day,
And crushed before the moth?

But, ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway;
Else the next cloud, that veils my skies,
Drives all these thoughts away.

COWPER.

The Cloud of Witnesses.

GIVE me the wings of faith, to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above—how great their joys!
How bright their glories be!

Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears.

I ask them whence their victory came;
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to his death.

They marked the footsteps that he trod,
His zeal inspired their breast;
And, following their incarnate God,
Possess the promised rest.

Our glorious Leader claims our praise
For his own pattern given,
While the long cloud of witnesses
Show the same path to heaven.

WATTS.

Dear Refuge of my Weary Soul.

DEAR Refuge of my weary soul,
On thee, when sorrows rise—
On thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies.

To thee I tell each rising grief,
For thou alone canst heal;
Thy word can bring a sweet relief
For every pain I feel.

But oh! when gloomy doubts prevail,
I fear to call thee mine;
The springs of comfort seem to fail,
And all my hopes decline.

Yet, gracious God, where shall I flee?
Thou art my only trust:
And still my soul would cleave to thee,
Though prostrate in the dust.

Thy mercy-seat is open still:
Here let my soul retreat,
With humble hope attend thy will,
And wait beneath thy feet.

MRS. STEELE.

Friends.

FRIEND after friend departs;
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end:
Were this frail world our only rest,
Living or dying, none were blest.

Beyond the flight of Time,
Beyond this vale of death,
There surely is some blessed clime,
Where life is not a breath,
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upwards to expire.

There is a world above,
  Where parting is unknown;
A whole eternity of love
  Formed for the good alone;
And faith beholds the dying there
Translated to a happier sphere.

Thus star by star declines
  Till all are passed away,
As morning high and higher shines
  To pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night;
They hide themselves in heaven's own light.

MONTGOMERY.

"As one whom his Mother comforteth."

Benighted on a lone and dreary wild,
Perplexed, exhausted, helpless, in despair,
I cast me down, and thought to perish there,
When through the gloom a face appeared and smiled;
And a sweet voice said: "Courage! rise, my child!
And I will guide thee safely on thy way."
As to night-watchers comes the morning ray,
So came that voice to me; and on that face
I seemed a loving tenderness to trace,
That soothed and cheered me as, forlorn, I lay;
I felt as feels the child whose throbbing grief
A mother's love assuages in its source;
And asking strength of Him who gave relief,
I straightway rose, and onward held my course.

W. L. Alexander.

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